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A  
CRITICAL  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
Old Testament.

Written originally in *FRENCH*,  
By Father *SIMON*, Priest of the Con-  
gregation of the *Oratory*;

And since translated into *ENGLISH*,  
By a Person of *Quality*.

L O N D O N,  
Printed, and are to be sold by *Walter Davis* in *Amen-Corner*.  
MDCLXXXII.

TO THE

# READER.

*Reader,*

HAVING seriously perus'd this Work in its Original, I thought I might be serviceable to the publick by giving in English a Piece of so much Learning, and from whence we may draw convincing Arguments for the confuting of all the atheistical Opinions of our Age. There are a sort of half-learned men, who, searching out of the Bible those things onely which at the first sight seem to destroy the authority of it, and having found any seeming contradiction, or what they think is erroneous, will be sure to exercise their wit in publishing to the world what, in their judgment, makes any thing against the authority of those holy Books which have, through all Ages, been look'd upon, by the learned and judicious, as composed by Prophets or men inspir'd by God; without considering that, to the most understanding persons, they onely shew their ignorance, in that they understand not how to give solutions to the difficulties of the Scriptures, which belongs onely to the learned, or else their wilfull obstinacy, in resolving to oppose whatever shall be authoris'd either by Divine or Humane Authority. We have a fresh example of what I have been saying in the person of him, who, not many



*To the Reader.*

years ago, occasion'd the publishing of that excellent Piece, intituled, *A Letter to a Deist*, wherein the Authour has onely answer'd the Objections propos'd to him; but if the person that was so desirous to have his Scruples answer'd, or any one else, have any more of such like Objections, they may here either find them particularly discuss'd, or else be instructed in the way how to resolve them themselves. I could wish this Criticism had been made by some of our own Communion, who might have alter'd nothing of the substance of it, but have left out onely some small reflexions upon the Protestants; Father *Simon* however is less inveterate and makes fewer of his reflexions than could be expected from a Roman Catholick Doctour; which thing is yet more pardonable in him in that he spares not even them of his own Church. If notwithstanding what I have already said, there shall be any who, at the first sight, shall be scandaliz'd with this Authour's free way of handling the Holy Scriptures, I give this caution to all such persons, either to let it alone and not concern themselves with it, or else to read it clear through, by which time I doubt not but they will be satisfy'd of their too nice scruples. As for the faults of the Press I cannot answer for them not having had leisure enough for the correcting of them, wherefore I shall onely here advise that the most considerable errata's are printed at the beginning of the Book, whither, Reader, if at any time you chance to doubt of the sense, be pleas'd to turn your eye.

*Farewell.*

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Authors Preface

Translated out of

F R E N C H.

**S**eeing I have at large explain'd in the first Chapter of this History the design of my whole Work, I shall onely here shew what benefit we may thence draw.

First, It is impossible to understand thoroughly the Holy Scriptures unless we first know the different states of the Text of these Books according to the different times and places, and be instructed of all the several changes that have happened to it. This we may understand by the first Book of this Critical History, where I have taken notice of the several revolutions of the Hebrew Text of the Bible from Moses to our time; and if I might be suffer'd to speak something here beforehand of the New Testament, I could shew some faults in the Translations thereof into our Tongue, which were not long since made by two learned Divines. This could be occasion'd

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tion'd onely by the little reflection they made upon the History of the Text they translated. They consider'd not for example that onely by leaving out, in the third Chapter of S. Luke, the Particle Or, which in English signifies Now, they favour'd the opinions of the ancient Marcionite Hereticks, who affirm'd that the two first Chapters of S. Luke had been added to his Gospel, and that they made it to begin with these words, In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, by leaving out the two foregoing Chapters concerning the Birth and Infancy of our Saviour: but the Church, who has always read according to the Original and the ancient Latin Translation, Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, has always authoriz'd the two first Chapters of S. Luke by reason of the Particle Or, Now, which the Grammarians call an adversative, which plainly denotes a connection with something that went before. No one could imagine this Particle to be of so great consequence in this place without being instructed in the History of the New Testament. But I am obliged to contain my self within the Books of the Old Testament.

Secondly, It is to be observ'd that I, considering onely their benefit who desire thoroughly to understand the Holy Scriptures, have inserted many usefull principles for the resolving of the greatest difficulties of the Bible, and at the same time answering of the Objections which are usually brought against the Authority of the Holy Scriptures. For example, having establish'd in the Hebrew Commonwealth the Prophets or publick Writers, who took care of collecting faithfully the acts of what pass'd of most importance in the State, we need not too curiously enquire, as usually men do, who were the Authours of each particular Book of the Bible, because it is certain that they were all writ by Prophets, which the Hebrew Commonwealth never wanted as long as it lasted.

Besides, as these same Prophets, which may be call'd publick Writers, for the distinguishing of them from other private

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private Writers, had the liberty of collecting out of the ancient Acts which were kept in the Registers of the Republick, and of giving a new form to these same Acts by adding or diminishing what they thought fit; we may hereby give a very good reason for the additions and alterations in the Holy Scriptures without lessening of their Authority, since the Authours of these additions or alterations were real Prophets directed by the Spirit of God. Wherefore their alterations in the ancient Acts are of as great Authority as the rest of the Text of the Bible.

We may by this same principle easily answer all the false and pernicious consequences drawn by Spinoza from these alterations or additions for the running down the Authority of the Holy Scripture, as if these corrections had been purely of humane Authority; whereas he ought to have consider'd that the Authours of these alterations having had the Power of writing Holy Scriptures had also the Power of correcting them. Wherefore I have made no scruple to give some examples of these alterations, and to conclude that all we find in the Holy Scriptures was not writ by contemporary Authours.

Spinoza  
Tract.  
Theolog.  
c. 8.

S. Jerom, Theodoret, and several other Fathers who were of this opinion, thought not that they hereby lessened the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, supposing at the same time that the Authours of these corrections were inspired by God.

By this principle we may also easily answer several objections which are usually made, to shew that Moses is not the onely Authour of the Books which we have under his name; for they prove onely that something has been added in series of time, which destroys not the Authority of the ancient Acts which were writ in Moses's time.

Herein Spinoza has shewn his ignorance, or rather malice in crying down the Authority of the Pentateuch, by reason

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of some alterations or additions therein, without considering the quality of the Authours of these alterations.

We ought however to take heed of multiplying these additions or corrections, as Spinoza and some others have very injudiciously done: but on the contrary we ought not absolutely to deny them, or too subtilly or nonsensically explain them, for these additions are of the same Authority as the rest of the Scripture; or else we must confess the whole not to be equally Divine and Canonical, as a Divine of Paris seems too boldly to have asserted.

This Divine has affirm'd that the Writers of the Holy Scriptures were inspir'd by God onely in things relating to matters of Faith, or which had some necessary connection or relation thereto; As for the other things in these Books, we ought not therein to acknowledge a more particular inspiration of God than in other Works which have been writ by godly persons. But besides that this principle is dangerous it is directly opposite to the Doctrine of the New Testament, which acknowledges every thing throughout the whole Scripture for propheticall, and to have been inspir'd. Wherefore I thought I ought to lay down some principles whereby we might ascribe every thing in the Holy Scriptures to Prophets or persons inspir'd by God, even to the alterations themselves, those onely excepted which had happened through length of time or negligence of Transcribers.

We may by this same principle of publick Writers or Prophets, which collected the Acts of what pass'd of most importance in the Hebrew Commonwealth, give reasons for several expressions in the Books of Moses, which seem to suppose him not to be the Authour of them.

The publick Writers which were in his time and writ out these ancient Acts, have spoke of Moses in the third person, and have us'd several other such like expressions which could not be Moses's: But they for all that have never the less

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Authority; because they can be ascrib'd onely to persons which Moses had commanded to put into writing the most important actions of his time.

We ought to apply this same principle to Joshua, Judges, and other Books which Spinoza has endeavour'd to lessen the Authority of pretending that some things have been added. He does Aben Ezra injury in affirming that this Rabbin did not take Moses to be the Authour of the Pentateuch, whereas what he has from him onely proves that there have been some additions inserted into the ancient Acts, which we cannot deny to be Moses's, at least but that they were writ in his time and by his order.

The same Spinoza shews his ignorance yet more in the Chap. 27. same place, where he concludes that the Book of Moses was Josh. 8. much less than the present one, because it was writ within the compass of an Altar of twelve Stones; but he is clearly mistaken in thinking that the places of Deuteronomy and Joshua which he alledges speak of the whole Law of Moses, whereas there are onely some Ordinances of Moses spoke of which he commanded should be observ'd, and that they might the better observe them he commanded them to be writ upon twelve Stones, or Pillars. This is so true, that Spinoza could not but mention in the series of his discourse this explanation, although he endeavours to pervert it as much as he can. This passage and several others such like are explain'd in the first Book of this History Chap. 6. where I have largely shewn what the word Law signifies in the Books of Moses.

Thirdly, This principle which I have laid down, concerning the way how the Holy Scriptures which we have at present have been collected, we having onely an abridgment of the Acts which were preserv'd intire in the Registry of the Republick; This principle I say is of great use for the resolving of many difficult questions concerning Chronology and

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and the Genealogies. For if it is certain that these Books are onely abridgments of larger Acts, and that they gave to the people onely what they thought was necessary for their instruction, we cannot affirm that all the Genealogies in this abridgment are successive one to another. Wherefore we may by this means reconcile several manifest contradictions in these Genealogies when they are set down in several places. We cannot also state any exact Chronology upon the authority of these Books, because that things are not always set down according to the times they happened in. Because they often onely join'd several Acts together in short, referring us to those same Acts which were kept more at large in the Registries which might in those times have been consulted.

For the better establishing this principle we may hereto joyn the observation which we have in this History made concerning the way of writing of Books heretofore upon little leaves, which were usually onely roll'd one upon another, without being sown together upon a little Roller. It has happened that as the order of these ancient Leaves or Scrolls has not been carefully enough kept, the order of things has been sometimes chang'd. Wherefore we ought not to blame the Authours of the Holy Scripture for the disorder in some places of the Holy Scripture; but we ought to complain of a misfortune which has happened to all ancient Books. This is partly the cause why the Hebrew Samaritan Text agrees not wholly with the Jewish Pentateuch, although these two Pentateuchs are Copies from one and the same Copy. We find also such like transpositions in the ancientest Greek Copies of the Septuagint Translation, which S. Jerom and before him Origen scrupled not to correct.

I had rather have recourse to this principle than to most of the answers which are usually brought for the excusing of these sort of transpositions in the Scripture Text. It is for example said in Gen. 20. that Abimelech fell in love with Sarah,

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Sarah, and yet the Historian had a little before said, that Sarah and Abraham were well stricken in years. We ought methinks much rather to lay this fault concerning the method of things upon the disposition of the ancient Scrolls, which in this and many other places has been chang'd, than to fly to a miracle and to suppose, as some Authours do, that God by a particular providence had restor'd to Sarah the beauty of her youth.

We may also say that in abridging of the Scripture to give it to the People, they have not always observed the order of times, but have chiefly endeavour'd to give those Histories which they thought were most proper for the instructing of the People.

We may join with this principle another not much different from this, by which we may give reasons for many repetitions of the same things. It is probable that they who joyn'd together the ancient Records for the making of the Body of canonical Scriptures which we at present have, troubled not themselves to leave out several Synonymous terms which were in their Copies; and perhaps were added for a farther illustration; these repetitions not seeming to them to be altogether superfluous, because they serv'd for explanation, they thought not fit to leave them wholly out. We ought methinks rather to have recourse to this principle than to make Moses or the Scribes of his time to be the Authours of many repetitions which are in his Books, as well as of a great many transpositions. And this is the chief reason why I chose rather herein to follow the opinion of S. Jerom and several other Fathers, who have been of opinion that Moses was not the Authour of the whole Pentateuch as we at present have it.

We ought not for all this always to have recourse to these principles, where we find repetitions or transpositions in the Scripture. I have on the contrary shewn that the Hebrews were

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were not very polite Writers, that they usually transpos'd, or repeated the same thing, and that sometimes they onely begin one matter, and then on a sudden go to another, and afterwards reassume their former discourse. We may easily understand this style in the Books of the New Testament, especially in the Epistles of S. Paul. But as it would be hard to justify all the transpositions and repetitions in the Books of Moses by their ways of expressing themselves, I have had recourse to other rules, leaving however every one the liberty of believing as he pleases, because these questions are such as we may be ignorant of, and may speak freely of without any prejudice to Religion. In quibus, says S. Augustin, salva fide qua Christiani sumus, aut ignoratur quid verum sit, & sententia definitiva suspenditur, aut aliter quam est humana & infirma suspicione conjicitur.

Fourthly, The great alterations which have happened, as we have shewn in the first Book of this Work, to the Copies of the Bible since the first Originals have been lost, utterly destroy the Protestants and Socinians Principle, who consult onely these same Copies of the Bible as we at present have them. If the truth of Religion remain'd not in the Church, it would be unsafe to search for it at present in Books which have been subject to so many alterations, and have in many things depended upon the pleasure of Transcribers; It is certain that the Jews, who have writ out these Books, have took the liberty of adding and leaving out certain letters according as they thought fit, and yet the sense of the Text often depends upon these letters; whereto we may add the uncertainty of the Hebrew Grammar, which could never be perfectly restor'd since its being lost. This has been explain'd at large at the end of the first Book, where we have given an account of the rise and progress of the Jewish Grammar.

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Besides, the Criticism we have made of the chief Translations of the Bible is an evident proof that it is almost impossible to translate the Holy Scripture, especially if we join herewith the project of a new Translation set down at the beginning of the third Book. Those Protestants without doubt are either ignorant or prejudic'd who affirm that the Scripture is plain of it self. As they have laid aside the Tradition of the Church, and will acknowledge no other principle of Religion but the Scripture it self, they were obliged to suppose it plain and sufficient for the establishing the truth of Faith without any Tradition.

But if we but consider the conclusions which the Protestants and Socinians draw from the same principle, we shall be convinc'd that their principle is not so plain as they imagine, since these conclusions are so different and the one absolutely denies what the other affirms.

Instead of believing with the Protestants that the shortest and most certain way of deciding the questions of Faith is to consult the Holy Scriptures, we shall on the contrary find in this Work that if we join not Tradition with the Scripture, we can hardly affirm any thing for certain in Religion. We cannot be said to quit the word of God by joining therewith the Tradition of the Church, since he who refers us to the Holy Scriptures has also refer'd us to the Church whom he has trusted with this holy pledge.

Before the Law was writ by Moses the ancient Patriarchs preserv'd their Religion in its purity by Tradition onely. After the Law was writ the Jews always upon difficulties consulted the Interpreters of this Law; and although they have too much encreas'd their Traditions through series of time, we ought not for all that to find fault with these same Traditions but the men who have been the depositaries of them. As for the New Testament, the Gospel was established in many Churches before any thing of it was writ, and since

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that time S. Irenæus, Tertullian and the other first Fathers have not, in their disputes against Hereticks, had recourse so much to the word of God contained in the Holy Scriptures, as to this same word which was not written but preserv'd in the chief Churches which had been founded by the Apostles.

When these Bishops were assembled in Councils they every one declar'd the belief of their own Church; so that this belief receiv'd in the first Churches serv'd afterwards as a rule for the explaining of the difficult places of the Scripture. Wherefore the Fathers of the Council of Trent wisely ordain'd that no one should interpret the Scripture against the common opinion of the Fathers; and this same Council made the not written Traditions to be of equal authority with the word of God contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, because it suppos'd that those Traditions which were not writ proceeded from our Saviour who communicated them to his Apostles, and from thence they at last came down to us.

We may call these Traditions an abridgment of the Christian Religion, which has been since the beginning of Christianity in the first Churches apart from the Holy Scripture. By this ancient abridgment of the Christian Religion we ought to explain the difficulties of the Scripture, as the Protestants themselves and amongst others Illyricus and Du Plessis are of opinion. Thus they are oblig'd to acknowledge the true Tradition of the Church, although they affirm the contrary in their disputes against the Catholics. We can establish no unity in Religion without supposing this ancient uniformity of belief ground'd upon the common consent of the first Apostolical Churches, and besides we cannot well confute the Socinians subtilties but by this means.

To conclude, although the Council of Trent ordain'd that we should not in interpreting of the Scripture deviate from the explanations of the Fathers, it has not for all that prohibited

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hibited private persons from searching out of other explanations of places not relating to matters of Faith. We may on the contrary say that men never endeavour'd so much to find out new interpretations of the Scripture Text as since this Council. They thought not that the Fathers had thoroughly sifted the matter. Wherefore I have made bold to give my opinion upon their Commentaries in the third Book. I have observed both their failures and perfections; and lastly I have examin'd their Works according to the rules of Criticism, because in those places there is no mention made of matters of Faith. We however at present find some learned persons who collect onely whatever they can find out of the Fathers Books upon the Scripture, as if the Fathers had better succeeded than the other Interpreters of the Bible.

They who search after truth it self without prejudice value not persons names nor their antiquity, especially in things not relating to Faith; and it is certain that most of the Fathers have not had all the necessary helps nor time enough to search into the great difficulties in the Scripture. The Commentaries of the modern Interpreters ought in many places to be prefer'd before those of the ancient ones, and we ought rather to search for Religion in the Fathers Interpretations than literal explanations of the Scripture Text. There are few who have apply'd themselves to this sort of study, and amongst the Latin Fathers there have been none except S. Jerom who were capable of doing it. Wherefore for the carrying on of my design of observing what I thought was necessary for the understanding of the Scripture, it was convenient that I should consult the Jewish Commentaries as well as those of the Catholick Doctours, that every one might be instructed as well in the method which has been observ'd even to this time in the Synagogue, as in the Church, for the explaining of the Holy Scriptures: I have join'd with



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the latter the Protestant and Socinian Authours, to the end one may profit by their new discoveries in this study, as the Fathers heretofore consulted the Greek Translations of the Bible which had been made by the greatest enemies of the Church.

Besides the principles I have already observ'd which may be found in several places of this History, I can affirm that I have copy'd from no Authour who has writ before me upon any part of this Subject, being perswaded that we have already but too many Books of all sorts, and but very few good ones.

For the avoiding this fault, and that I might at the same time be usefull to the Publick, I have carefully read over the Works of the chief Authours, who have writ upon the Criticism of the Bible, and after having observ'd their faults for my particular instruction I thought I might publish them, having no other design but to be usefull to others; I dare affirm that I have wanted no necessary helps for the completing of this Work. I have had for a long time within my own power a great many Books which were brought out of the Levant, and are at present in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory of Paris, and besides having followed no other employment, I have had leisure enough to think upon a Work of this importance. I have also, through the help of my friends, consulted many learned and judicious persons, thereby to know their opinions upon the greatest difficulties.

But after all I found that no one had hitherto thoroughly search'd into the Criticism of the Scripture; every one has commonly spoke according to his prejudices. The Jews, for example, who consulted onely their Authours, have had but a very slender knowledge herein, and they have contented themselves with admiring what they understood not. As for the Christians, most of the Fathers have been so much prejudic'd

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judic'd in favour of the ancient Translations of the Church, that they have wholly neglected the Hebrew Text, besides that they have not had all the necessary helps for the thorough examining of what belongs to the Criticism of the Bible.

As for the Writers of our times, whether Catholicks or Protestants, I have found none who were wholly free from prejudice. The two Buxtorfs, who have got much reputation, especially amongst the Protestants, have in most of their Works onely shewn they were bias'd in favour of the Rabbins opinions, without having consulted any other Authours. Father Morin on the contrary was prejudic'd against the Rabbins before he had read them, and under pretence of defending the ancient Translations of the Church, he has collected all the proofs he could find to destroy the originals of the Bible.

There is indeed much more judgment in Ludovicus Capellus's Criticism, but as he endeavour'd hardly any thing else but to find out the various readings, he has multiply'd them. Wherefore I have in this History laid down some principles for the explaining of several various readings, without blaming the Transcribers for being mistaken in all those places. Besides Capellus has taken for various readings some downright errors of Transcribers, which might be easily corrected by good Copies: Lastly, he has not methinks given authority enough to the Massoret, which has fix'd the way of reading the Hebrew Text of the Bible. For although the Jews have not been infallible in their Massoret or Criticism, we ought not however to reject or despise it onely because it comes from the Jews. As the question is about the custom of reading, we ought to consult them amongst whom this custom has been preserv'd. But notwithstanding these faults and some others which I mention not here, Capellus his Work ought to be preferr'd before all others upon this Subject, and although he was a Protestant he was not prejudic'd

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judic'd in favour of those of his Religion. They of Geneva, Sedan and Leyden oppos'd the publishing of this Book for ten years together, being perswaded it destroy'd the principle of their Religion, and oblig'd them to have recourse to the Tradition of the Catholicks. Father Petau, a Jesuit, Father Morin of the Oratory and Father Mersennus, a Minimme, got the Kings Licence for the printing of it. This so alarm'd the Court of Rome that it had almost condemn'd it, it being a thing without precedent that heretical Books wherein matters of Divinity are treated of, should be printed in France with the King's Licence. But Father Morin, who had helped forward the printing of it, and perhaps had not foreseen all the consequences, writ to Cardinal Francis Barberini, that they at Rome did Capellus a kindness in condemning his Criticism which had created him the hatred of those of his Sect, and that at the same time they did the Catholicks injury, who made use of this Book to shew that the Protestants have no certain principle of their Religion having rejected the Tradition of the Church; Capellus however never intended to draw this consequence from his Book.

Lastly, Vossius, who could not allow of the ignorance of some Protestants, whom he calls half Jews, undertook in a Work for that purpose to defend the Septuagint Translation, but, under pretence of rejecting the Massoret Copies, he has flown into another extream concerning the Septuagint, so that we may say there are very few persons who have been able to keep the medium which was necessary for the finding out of the truth. This I have endeavour'd to do in this Work, by preserving as much as possibly I could the authority of the original Hebrew, and Translations. I have had no prejudice either for the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, or any other Language. But I have carefully examin'd according to the rules of Criticism the Hebrew Text and all the Translations; and after  
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having observ'd the various readings, I have shewn how we might correct the faults in the present Copies.

If we ought to reject the original Hebrew because of the faults which are therein, we ought also for the same reason to reject all the ancient Translations of the Church which have been made from the Hebrew, because they are also faulty as well as the Hebrew Text, and consequently we ought to admit of no Copy of the Scripture; But these extreams are very dangerous.

Origen and S. Jerom, who found many faults in the ancient Greek Copies of the Septuagint Translation, would not for all that reject it; they endeavour'd onely to restore it according to the common rules of Criticism. I have follow'd the example of these two great men, and as there has been nothing upon this subject as yet in French, no one ought to wonder why I make use sometimes of certain expressions which are not altogether exact French; every art has peculiar terms which are in a manner consecrated to it. Thus we shall often find in this Work the word Critick, and some other such like, which I have been forced to use the better to express my self according to the terms of the art I treated of. Besides persons who are Scholars are already us'd to these terms in our Tongue. When we speak, for example, of Capellus's Book, printed under the Title of Critica Sacra, and of the English Commentaries call'd Critici Sacri, we say in French La Critique de Capelle, Les Critiques d'Angleterre.

It is also to be observ'd that for the making my self more usefull to the world, I usually set down the Testimonies of the Authours I make use of in abridgment onely and according to the sense, there being nothing more tedious than long quotations of passages where sometimes there are onely five or six words which are necessary. I design'd onely in this Work to speak many things in few words, and that my  
citations



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*citations might be of greater credit I have put at the end of the Book a Catalogue of the Authours I have quoted which are not well known.*

*But I have spoke enough of the design and profit of this Work, I am now onely to desire those who will take the pains to reade it carefully, to tell me charitably of my faults, to the end that I may profit by their admonitions. It is but reasonable that after having criticis'd upon so many Authours I should submit my self to the censure of others.*

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# A T A B L E OF THE C H A P T E R S contain'd in this T R E A T I S E.

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*B O O K the First.*

Concerning the Hebrew Text of the Bible from *Moses* to our time.

- C**HAPTER I. *The Design of the whole Work, with several illustrations on the same Subject.*
- II. *Who were the Authours of the Holy Scriptures, and what was the office of the Prophets among the Hebrews. The liberty which those Prophets had to add or diminish to these Holy Books.*
- III. *The Origine of some changes in the Texts of the Bible. Reasons why the same Acts in different Books of the Bible are differently reported.*
- IV. *A more particular explanation of the changes which have happened to the Holy Scriptures, especially since the Captivity. The opinions of the Fathers and Rabbins upon this Subject. How the Collection of the Bible has been made.*
- V. *Proof of the additions and other changes which have been made in the Scripture, and particularly in the Pentateuch. Moses cannot be Authour of the Books which are attributed to him. Several Examples.*
- VI. *The Objection of the Jews to shew that Moses is the onely Authour of the Law. Answers with new proofs to destroy that Opinion.*
- VII. *After what manner the Books of Moses have been writ. Books attributed to Patriarchs who liv'd before Moses. History of the Sabbaites or ancient Chaldeans.*
- VIII. *Other Books of the Bible, the Collection of which the Jews ascribe to the great Assembly held under Esdras. Examination of this Assembly and of every Book of the Bible in particular.*

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IX. The

## A TABLE of the CHAPTERS.

- IX. *The general division of the Books of the Bible. Jewish and Christian Antiquities on this Subject reconciled. In what sense the Jews deny Daniel to be a Prophet. They differ not in this from the opinion of the Christians.*
- X. *The reasons of Joseph d'Albo to shew that the Law of Moses has never been corrupted. The examination of the Pentateuch of the Samaritans, and whether it may be proved from thence that we have to this day the ancient Copy of the Books of Moses.*
- XI. *A particular examination of the Hebrew Samaritan Text, whether it ought to be preferred to the Hebrew Text of the Jews. Divers Examples of various readings, with reflections.*
- XII. *Reflections upon the Hebrew Samaritan Text.*
- XIII. *Of the Samaritan Characters. Their derivation. Of the Phœnician Letters. Explanation of some passages of the Greek Fathers touching the Samaritan Copies of the Letter Thau.*
- XIV. *Of the Hebrew Tongue, whether it is the first Language of the world. After what manner Languages have been invented. Reconciliations of different Opinions on this Subject.*
- XV. *The manner how Tongues have been invented more particularly explain'd. A digression concerning the original of Languages.*
- XVI. *The state of the Hebrew Text from the return out of Captivity to our Saviour. Of the Sect of the Sadducees. The Sadducees have received all the Bible. The Hebrew Copy of the Septuagint.*
- XVII. *The state of the Hebrew Text at the time of our Saviour, and at the beginning of Christianity. Of Philo and Josephus. This last is not very exact. Christianity has made the Jews more careful. Their Innovations.*
- XVIII. *The System of Father Morin and Vossius concerning the corruption of the Hebrew Text by the Jews. Explanation of the opinion of the Fathers upon this point.*
- XIX. *The Opinion of Origen and S. Jerom concerning the Hebrew Text and the Septuagint Translation. The manner of these two Authors writing. The Jews have not cor-*

- rupted the Holy Scriptures. Conclusion. Several Reflections.*
- XX. *The state of the Hebrew Text for the first Centuries. Various readings of the Scripture in the Talmud.*
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A C R I

BOOK I.

(I)

CHAP. I.

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# A CRITICAL HISTORY

OF THE

# Old Testament.

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BOOK I.

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CHAP. I.

*Concerning the Hebrew Text of the Bible from Moses to our time.*

*The design of the whole Work, with several illustrations on the same Subject.*

**N**One can doubt but that the truths contained in the Holy Scripture are infallible and of Divine Authority ; since they proceed immediately from God, who in this has onely made use of the ministry of Men to be his Interpreters. So there is no person either Jew or Christian, who does not acknowledge that the Scripture being the pure word of God, is at the same time the first principle and foundation of Religion.

B

But

But as Men have been the Depositories of these sacred Books, as well as of all others, and their first Originals have been lost, it was in some sort impossible, but that there must needs happen some changes, as well by reason of the length of time, as the carelessness of Transcribers. Wherefore S. Augustin recommends to those who will study the Scriptures, above all things to apply themselves to the Criticisms of the Bible, and to correct the errors of the Copies. *Codicibus emendandis primitus debet invigilare solertia eorum qui Scripturas Divinas nosse desiderant.*

Aug. lib. 2.  
de Doct. Ch.

This sort of Criticisme in that Age was so much in use, that many Ladies of Quality made it their particular study: and S. Jerome was oftentimes employed in answering the difficulties they propos'd to him concerning the various readings of the Bible. There is nothing more learned upon this Subject than the answer of this Father to Junia and Fretella, who had writ to him from the very midst of Germany a Letter, in which they made it plainly appear that they understood no less the Greek and Hebrew than the Latin Tongue. S. Jerome cannot otherwise satisfie their doubts than by directing them to the best Copies of the Bible, and by giving them several rules of Criticisme whereby they might mend the vulgar Greek and Latin Copies by others more correct, and even by the original Hebrew. He freely acknowledges that to write to these Ladies, with any sort of exactness, upon the difficulties of Criticisme which they had propos'd to him, he had more need of Learning than Wit. *Queritis à me rem magni operis & majoris invidia in qua scribentis non ingenium sed eruditio comprobetur.*

Ep. ad Jun.  
& Fretella  
† Junia & Fretella  
were two learned  
men. He calls y<sup>m</sup>  
dilectissimi Fratres

Seeing this study is at this time neglected, and there are few that apply themselves to it with diligence, by reason of the great difficulties they meet with, I thought I might be profitable to the publick in giving them a critical History of the Texts of the Bible from Moses to our time, and of the chief Translations which have been made as well by Jews as Christians: to which I have added a project of a new Translation of the Bible, after having mark't the defects of most of those which have hitherto been made; last of all I have concluded this Work with a Criticisme upon the best Commentaries on the Bible, to the end one might not onely be instructed in the Text of the Holy Scriptures, but also in the way whereby we ought to explain them. I am perswaded one cannot reade the Bible with profit, if one be not first of all instructed

instructed in that which regards the Criticisme of the Text, and one shall find herein several remarks touching the style of the Scripture, which is much more obscure than people usually think it.

I have divided this Work into three Books, the first of which treats at large of the Authours of the Bible, which I have called Prophets with Josephus and most of the Fathers, because they were in effect directed by the Spirit of God, and that S. Peter calls the whole Scripture Prophecies. Joseph. con. Appo

During the Hebrew Commonwealth, there were from time to time among them these sorts of persons inspired by God, were it to write divine and prophetick Books, as the same Josephus has remark't; or, as Eusebius says, to distinguish betwixt those which were truly prophetick and others that were not. Wherefore we ought not to search with too much curiosity who have been the particular Authours of every Book of the Bible; it sufficeth according to the Maxime of Gregory the Great, that these Books were written by Prophets. *Quis hac scripserit valde supervacue queritur, cum tamen Author Libri Spiritus Sanctus fideliter creditur.* Euseb. de pres. p. Eu. Greg. prol. in lib. Job.

I have called these Prophets, Scribes, as they are termed in the Bible or publick Writers, to distinguish them from private Writers, who apply'd themselves ordinarily to the writing of the History of their times, onely out of the motives of interest, whereas the Prophets we speak of, did faithfully collect the transactions that passed in the whole state and kept them in Registeries ordain'd for that purpose.

If these publick Writers were in the Hebrew Commonwealth from the time of Moses, as is extreamly probable, it will be very easie to satisfie all difficulties that may be brought to shew that the Pentateuch was not wholly written by Moses; which is ordinarily proved by the manner of its writing, which seems to insinuate that some other than Moses collected the Acts, and put them down in writing: supposing these publick Writers, to them we may attribute what relates to the historical part of these Books, and to Moses all that which belongs to the Laws and Ordinances, and it is this which the Scripture calls the Law of Moses: thus one may say in this sense that the whole Pentateuch is truly Moses's, because those who made the Collection lived in his time, and did not do it but by his order.

The use of these Prophets or publick Writers continued successively in the Hebrew Commonwealth; for we see that the Scripture styles Prophets *Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Abia*, and some others who had writ the Annals of their times, out of which part of the Books of the Bible which are come to our hands are composed, as it evidently appears from the Histories contained in the Books of the Kings and in the Chronicles.

One may further, from this principle of publick Writers give solid reasons of many additions and changes which we find in the Holy Scriptures. And it will be very difficult to explain them by any other means than this. One may take notice then that these Prophets or publick Writers, were not onely charg'd with the collection of the Acts, which fell out in their time, and the reducing them to Registeries, but they gave sometimes a new Form to the Acts themselves which had been collected by their Predecessours, by adding or diminishing according as they thought fit. Their Collections for all this had never the less Authority, as *Theodoret* has judiciously observed, on the 10th. of *Joshua*, where he assures us that the History that we have under the name of *Joshua* is not his; but that it was extracted from ancient Records, which the Authour cites that we might give credit to his Collections.

*Massius*, who hath writ a learned Commentary upon the same History, shews that *Joshua* could not write all which is there reported: because there are Actions which happened not till a long time after him, and it is the same thing with most part of the other Books of the Bible; so that it is not absolutely necessary that all the passages which we find in the Bible should be intirely written by Authours of the same Age, and who were witnesses of the things which they report, otherwise we shall give no credit to what is written in *Genesis*. This being allow'd as an undoubted truth, we are methinks obliged to have recourse to these publick Writers we spoke of, to render the Holy Scriptures Authentick, notwithstanding all the changes and additions we find therein. They had the liberty in collecting the Acts which were in their Registeries, to add, diminish and change according as they thought fit, and the Books, as *Eusebius* says, which were declared sacred, were reviewed by persons inspired by God, who judged whether they were truly prophetick and divine.

The

The Fathers also confirm our opinion, touching the Prophets or publick Writers, in the person of *Esdra*s, whom they acknowledge to be the compiler of the Bible which we at present make use of: for were it that *Esdra*s made a new the holy Scriptures as some of them assure us, or that he did onely collect the ancient Records, adding, diminishing, or changing what he thought necessary, as others with more probability say, it will nevertheless be true that *Esdra*s could not compose this body of Scripture, with these alterations, but in quality of Prophet or publick Writer; so is he called in the same Scripture, by way of eminency, the *Scribe* or *Writer*. It is moreover certain that the Books of the Bible that are come to our hands, are but abridgments of the ancient Records, which were more full and copious, before the last abridgment was made for the publick use of the people: this opinion, which is *Origen's* and some other Fathers, is conformable to the Scripture, which very often refers the Reader to the ancient Acts more at large recited, which the Jews no doubt did for some time preserve in their Registeries. Even *Tertullian* thought that the Jews have suppress many Books of the Bible for particular reasons: However it is, none can doubt but that we want at present whole Histories and Prophecies which the Scripture makes mention of. The Jew, who composed the Book intituled *Cozri* is of the same opinion with *Origen*, that those who made the Collection of the holy Scriptures, put down nothing but what they thought necessary for the instruction of the people, and that the rest remained in their Registeries.

As then these Books are but the abridgments of much more large Records, one cannot establish upon the Scripture an exact and certain Chronology, because the Genealogies are not always immediate: we have a considerable example hercof even in the Genealogies which are set down in the Line of our Saviour, and it is easie to produce other examples. It would be foolish, for example, to acknowledge no other Kings of *Persia*, but those which are set down in the Scripture, and to establish thereupon a Chronology, as most part of the Rabbins have done very injudiciously. On the contrary those that know that there is nothing spoke of in the Bible but what relates to the Jews, have made no scruple to have recourse to prophane Authours, where they find many other Kings, and by consequence a much larger Chronology: one may reconcile by this means with more ease sacred Chrono-



Chronology with prophane, in supplying by the one what one thinks is wanting in the other.

Besides these changes which we have already explained, and which one may attribute to those who have by authority made the collection of the Bible, we have set down many others, which we ought to lay to the injury of Time and the negligence of Transcribers. As the Hebrew Copies were formerly written upon little Scrolls or Leaves placed one upon another, every one of which made a Volume, it has happened that the order of these Scrolls being by chance changed, the order of things has been accordingly transposed. The Jews did not at that time stitch together their Scrolls with so much exactness as they do at present, and that was common to all the Books which the Criticks have since corrected. *Origen* and *S. Jerome* have re-established many transpositions in the Greek Copies of the Septuagint, chiefly in the Prophecy of *Jeremiah* and in the Book of *Job*; where there are transpositions of Verses and whole Chapters. These Fathers in those days writ their Criticisms in a Language understood by the people, and *S. Jerome* addresses himself sometimes to Ladies in his critical Remarks on this Subject. He writes to *Paula* and *Eustochium* that the Book of *Esther*, as it was read in the Church, was full of errors; and he moreover affirms that there wanted near seven or eight hundred Verses in the Book of *Job*. I believe nevertheless that we ought to read in this place of *S. Jerome*, *septuaginta ferme aut octoginta Versus*, and not *septingenti* or *octingenti*, because there is little probability that in a Book which consists at present but of about a thousand Verses, there should want eight hundred, after what manner soever we explain the Verses, which were at that time more short than they are at present, as we shall find it elsewhere. However it is, *S. Jerome* calls this Book, *Decurtatum, laceratum & corrosum*; and in his Preface upon *Jeremiah* he observes that the order of the Visions of this Prophecy were altogether misplac't in the Greek and Latin Copies, that is to say in the Septuagint Translation, which was then the onely authentick one acknowledged through the whole Church.

The people which were advertised of these errors, and of many others which the negligence of Transcribers had brought into the holy Scriptures, were not at all scandaliz'd at it, and the Fathers noted them with much liberty, as we may see in their

Commen-

Orig.  
Hier.

Hier. in  
pref. in  
lib. Eth.  
Id. in lib.  
Job.

In pref.  
in Jerem.

Commentaries chiefly upon the New Testament, where they observe the transposition of words, the divers readings and other alterations; part of which they lay upon the Hereticks of those times, whom they accuse for altering the Greek Translations of the New Testament. They were perswaded that these errors that were crept into the Bible by the means of these Transcribers, had no relation to Faith or good Manners, or carried any weight to the framing of the Judgment which we ought to make of the Scriptures in general.

This does not hinder us but that we should acknowledge the Divine Providence in the preservation of this Book which has past through so many hands and so many ages. A great many of these errors of Transcribers relate to the Chronology and Genealogies in the Books of the Old Testament: but we may say with *S. Augustine* that these difficulties are in the number of those of which we may speak freely and we may be ignorant of *salva Fide* S. Aug. *quâ Christiani sumus*: wherefore although he was perswaded that the Translation of the Septuagint was Divine and Prophetick, he makes no scruple sometimes to leave it; and does say that the Greek Copies are corrupt in such and such places.

This same Providence has likewise not permitted the Jews maliciously to corrupt the holy Scriptures, as many Fathers seem to reproach them. *Origen*, *S. Jerome* and *S. Augustine* have done them more justice; and those who at this day reproach the Jews with the same thing have not thoroughly examined the matter. 'Tis this that made me with more exactness to search into the truth and examine the sense of the Fathers upon this Subject.

It is true that *Origen* and *S. Jerome* speak sometimes after the same manner as the other Fathers do against the Jews, but I have made it appear that in those places they conform themselves to the common Opinions, and that elsewhere they declare their thoughts with more freedom. This method of writing is very usual with these two Fathers, and *S. Jerome* justifies it very often against those that accus'd him of being wavering in his Opinions, and at the same time vindicates *Origen*. Moreover he gives rules how one may know when he speaks according to other mens Opinions, though he makes no mention at all of them. *Ribera* the Rib. com.  
in Job. Jesuit, who had seriously read the Works of *S. Jerome*, says, in speaking of him, *Solent saepe vulgares interpretationes & opiniones sequi, ne unus multis repugnare videatur. Contentus aut ibi aut alibi quod*

Orig.  
Aug.  
Hier.

*quod verum erat docuisse.* One may observe then that there is a great deal of difference betwixt that which concerns the Articles of our Faith, and that which belongs simply to Criticisme. The Fathers have explain'd themselves several ways upon the latter but not upon the former. Nevertheless *Origen* and *S. Jerome* have accused the Jews, (according to the common Opinion of that time) for having falsified the Scripture, and deny it elsewhere as their own real Sentiments.

I do not think it necessary for me to run over the divers readings which the Fathers have made remarks on in the holy Scriptures, since the most part of those who have made exact Commentaries on the Bible have already observed them. *S. Jerome* alone suffices for what concerns the several readings in the Hebrew Text; because he very often ascribes the difference which is between the new Translation and that of the Septuagint to the variance of the Hebrew Copies. The Church seems in some sort to authorise these diversities, since we read them in the places of publick Worship, and find them in Books consecrated to the same purpose. She receives for example equally the Chronology of the Hebrew Text according to the vulgar Translation and that of the Septuagint, which is read every year in the Churches on *Christmas Eve*, after the same manner as it is inserted in the Roman Martyrology. And nevertheless every one knows there is a vast difference in this point betwixt the Vulgar and the Septuagint.

Moreover although the vulgar Translation has been declar'd authentick by the Council of *Trent*, the ancient Latin Translation which was made out of the Septuagint, has been continued in the Missals; and there are Popes that have wisely condemn'd the indiscreet zeal of some who have pretended that all the passages which we find in the Missals ought to be reformed after the vulgar Translation confirmed by the Council. To which we may add that those who have corrected the vulgar Translation by order of the Popes *Sixtus V.* and *Clement VIII.* have not pretended to correct all the errors in it; and we may moreover observe from the Preface to the last correction that it might have been rendred more exact, but for divers particular reasons there are several places left untouched which might have been amended.

It is likewise upon the same grounds that the Western Church, in authorising the new Translation of *S. Jerome*, and preferring it to that of the Septuagint, would not admit this Father's Translation

Martyro.  
Rom.

Sixt. V.  
Clem. VIII.

lation of the Psalms to be publickly used: which was no less exact than that of his other Books of the Scripture. In a word, the Church has never forbid the placing of several readings in the Margin of the Bible even in the vulgar Translation. And Cardinal *Pallavicino* was of opinion there might be made a more exact Translation of the Bible than the Vulgar, notwithstanding that had been declared Authentick.

*Mariana* the Jesuit goes further, for, after having alledged the Authority of the most able Divines, who affirm there are errors in the vulgar Translation, which were left on purpose, he adds, that part of the faults and errors which were in the Hebrew and Greek Copies do remain in the Vulgar. *Multa in Hebraicis & Græcis Codicibus vitia esse ostendimus, multa mendacia in rebus minutis; eorum pars aliqua non exigua in nostra Editione vulgata extat.*

It's certain says this Jesuit that the Hebrew Copies vary in several places, and that we read differently the same Verses in the Latin Translations by *S. Jerome* of the Old and New Testament. And nevertheless we must agree that there is but one reading true. Whence he concludes that it is absolutely necessary that one of these readings must be erroneous in the vulgar Translation: at last this Authour shews very plainly that the intention of the Council of *Trent* in declaring the vulgar Translation authentick was not to exempt it from all sorts of faults, but onely from errors which might introduce a change either in Faith or Manners; which he confirms by several Authorities, and principally by the Testimony of *Andrew de Vega* and *Jacob Lanis*, at that time Superiour of the Order of Jesuits, who assisted at the Council. He answers likewise the difficulties that may be started against this Opinion, which seems in some manner to destroy the truth of the holy Scriptures; and he gives rules for the correcting of the errors of the vulgar Translation, after the amendments which had already been made.

All these reasons and several others not now necessary to be named, made me take the liberty of examining in my Book the divers readings and other changes which have happened in the holy Text. The Catholicks, who are perswaded their Religion depends not onely on the Text of Scripture, but likewise on the Tradition of the Church, are not at all scandaliz'd, to see that the misfortune of Time and the negligence of Transcribers have wrought changes in the holy Scriptures as well as in prophane

C

Authours:

Pallav. Hist.  
Com. Teut.

Mari. pro  
ca. vulg.  
ch. 22.

Concil.  
Trent.

De Veg.  
Ja. Lanis.

Mar. ibid.  
ch. 23. ib.  
ch. 24.



Authours: there are none but prejudic't Protestants or ignorant people that can be offended at it. I say, prejudic't Protestants or ignorant people, because the most understanding amongst them have made no scruple to acknowledge them as well in the Old as in the New Testament. The most learned Work which we have upon the several readings and other changes of the Old Testament, is the Book of *Ludovicus Capellus*, Minister and Professor at *Saumur*, intituled *Critica Sacra*.

Lud. Cap.

'Tis true this Book so much displeas'd those of his Religion, that they stopt the Impression of it, till *John Capell*, who a while since turn'd Catholick and was the Son of the Authour, got leave of the King to print his Father's Book. Father *Morin* of the Oratory had likewise a hand in this Impression, thinking he should doe great service for the Church against the Protestants in publishing this Work, which was printed at *Paris* by *Cramoisi*, in the year 1650. and it contains nothing else but several readings, and a great many errors which he thought were crept into the Copies of the Bible, through the fault of Transcribers. The Authour acknowledges he had been thirty six years about it, so that in some sort it may be called a Master-piece of this nature. 'Tis true *Buxtorf* has writ a very learned answer, but has rather contributed to the reputation than disadvantage of it, and excepting some places, which are not very many, *Capellus* his Book remains untouch't.

Buxt. Anticir.

Some English Protestants have writ against this Work, endeavouring to render the Authour odious among those of his own Religion, as if he had been in agreement with Father *Morin*; but the Apology which *Capell* has writ in his own defence, shews clearly that he has said nothing of which he was not fully perswaded. And that his enemies to no purpose upbraid him of destroying with the Papists (to use their own terms) the Word of God. *Grotius* on the other side very much commends this Criticisme in an Epistle to this Authour, where he tells him among other things, *Contentus esto magnis potius quam multis laudatoribus*. Upon the whole matter the contrary opinion to *Capellus* has been maintained by none but the most zealous and most ignorant Protestants; chiefly since *Buxtorf* the Son has undertaken to defend the purity of the Hebrew Text, following his Father's prejudice, who had consulted about this point none but the Writing of the Rabbins. Those amongst the Catholicks who are

Grot. Ep. ap. Cap.

are of the same opinion, seem to have embrac't it onely as they were Professours of the Hebrew Tongue, but not having examin'd into the depth of the matter.

I thought then that following so great an Authour, who is so generally approved by the Catholicks against the Protestants, I might freely make a critical History of the Text of the Hebrew Bible; and as he complained that for want of manuscript Copies he could not observe several more readings, I have supplied that defect by the search which I have made into good Manuscripts, which I have with care examin'd. By the help of these Manuscripts I have likewise given rules to discover the original of most part of the errors of Transcribers, so that one may more easily establish the true reading of the Text of the Bible: one may likewise at the same time discover the good Hebrew Manuscripts from those which are not so, and to that purpose I have compared several Copies, marking the good ones and their evil qualities. Moreover as the Criticisme of the Jews which we ordinarily call the *Mazoret* has extremely chang'd the Hebrew Text, I have likewise examin'd with care that Criticisme, and without relying upon the Testimony of a great many Authours, who have onely spoke according to their prejudices, or according as they have read in others, I have read it my self that I might make the better Judgment of it. And I have done the *Mazoret* as much justice as I could without approving their trifling and unprofitable remarks. Those who despise it and altogether fling it aside, have not considered that one may draw thence many usefull rules whereby one may defend the Septuagint Translation, and many other ancient Interpreters in many places. On the contrary those who think it infallible, have not seriously weigh'd the ancient Translations which went before the *Mazoret*, because it is easie to demonstrate that the *Mazoret* or Tradition have never so settled the way how to reade Hebrew but that it has vary'd according to times and places. One may see this more at large in the History which I have recited of the state of the Hebrew Text from the Collection of the holy Scriptures after the Captivity of Babylon, to the time which the *Mazoret* was reduc't to art, which happen'd not till towards the seventh Century.

The Sect of the Jews which we call *Caraites*, of which I have largely treated in this Criticisme, authorizes very much the

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*Mazoret*,

*Mazoret*, for this Sect lays aside all other not well grounded Traditions of the Jews, and embraces this with the Jewish Rabbins their sworn Enemies. The Translation of *S. Jerome* comes likewise nigher the *Mazoret* than the Septuagint Translation, not onely because he was less distant from them, but likewise for that in his Translation he made use of a Jew of the School of *Tiberias* to which we ascribe the *Mazoret*. Since that time the Jews have corrected their Copies according to the Reformation of the Doctours of *Tiberias*, and the severall readings which have been since made consist but in Trifles, which I have made appear in the examination of many Manuscripts, which are taken for very ancient, yet nevertheless are after the *Mazoret*.

Last of all, I have concluded this Book with the History of the Jewish Grammarians, where I have observ'd the rise and progress of the Hebrew Grammar; this last History which I have collected from the Rabbins own Books, clearly shews the uncertainty of the Hebrew Text and Tongue.

Although the Hebrew Grammar was reduc't to art but in the ninth Century, yet there was a certain standing Grammar that was of use, as one may say, which is sometimes better than the uncertain Rules of the new Rabbins. We must nevertheless acknowledge that the observations made upon the Grammar are of great use for the understanding of the Bible, chiefly if we join them with other helps which we may draw from the ancient Interpreters of the Scripture, we shall plainly see in this Work that the new Grammars and Dictionaries of the Rabbins, are not sufficient for the understanding the Hebrew if we separate them from the ancient Translations which will give very great light into this Subject. On the contrary, we cannot perfectly understand this Tongue by the ancient Translations if we do not apply the diligence of the new Jewish Grammarians.

This is what in general is contain'd in the first Book of this historical Criticisme: if I had not reserv'd the treating of the severall readings which we find in the New Testament to a Second Volume, I had shewn more at large that the Fathers never doubted but that there were many changes in the Greek Copies of this Book as well as in the Latin, most part of them diligently point them out, and for want of the Original which is lost, they have recourse to the Rules of Criticisme to determin which is  
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the best reading. Thus the Authour of the Commentary, which we attribute to *S. Ambrosius*, upon the Epistle to the Romans, examining the 14th. Verse of the 5th. Chapter of the same Epistle judiciously observes the difference betwixt the Greek and Latin Copies, and, after having prefer'd some ancient Latin Copies before the Greek, he gives this Rule of Criticisme whereby we may judge of the severall readings, *Hoc verum arbitror quando & ratio & historia & autoritas observatur*. He pretends that we ought not to reade in this place as we do at this day in the vulgar Translation, that *from Adam to Moses death has rul'd over all who had not sinn'd*. But contrarily we ought to reade it without the negative particle, over those who had sinn'd. And to maintain this reading he defends it by the authority of the Latin Copies at that time, and of many ancient Fathers who had read it after the same way. He concludes then that we ought not to prefer the Greek Copies to such ancient Latin ones which had been made upon the Greek. Nevertheless *S. Jerome* has in this place corrected the Latin Edition by the Greek Copies of his time; but it is not necessary that I should dwell longer on this Subject, those that will be more particularly instructed may reade *Beza's* Notes upon the New Testament, where he recounts Beza. a number of severall readings of the Greek Copies which he had, which consist not in trivial things, as some may imagine, but in whole periods omitted or added, and in words which often change the sense. I'll give a few examples beforehand to take away all doubt, and more may be seen in the Remarks of the same Authour.

In his Annotation on the 14th. Verse and 23d. Chapter of *S. Matthew* he observes that *Origen* and *Eusebins* have not read that whole Verse in their Copies; and that he has not likewise found it in a very ancient Greek Copy, and likewise that we do not meet with it in ancient Latin Copies, that the Syriack Interpreter and *S. Chrysostome* have it indeed in their Copies, but in another order and before the 13. Verse. He observes likewise that the 44th. Verse of the 27th. of *S. Matthew* is not in an ancient Greek Copy, and he believes that some Transcriber has rac't it out, because it seems to be contrary to what is reported in *S. Luke*. The same *Beza* remarks upon the second Verse of the first Chapter of *S. Mark*, that in all the Greek Copies excepting three, he has read (*as it is written in the Prophets*)  
whereas

whereas in the vulgar Translation we read according to S. Jerome and those three Greek Copies (*as it is written in the Prophet Esaiab*) which makes a clear different sense. He believes that the true reading is that which is printed in the vulgar Translation, yet nevertheless those of *Geneva* have preferr'd the other in their French Version. Upon the 26th. Verse of the 2d. Chapter of the same Gospel, he observes that these words (*in the days of Abiathar the high Priest*) are not in an ancient Greek Copy.

In his remark upon the Genealogy of our Saviour, which is set down in the third Chapter of S. Luke, after having said that there are abundance of variations, and that he onely observes those which are of importance, he adds, that his ancient Greek Copy differs much from other Greek Copies in the summing up of the persons which are set down in that Genealogy, in effect this variety of readings is very considerable, as one may see in his Notes upon the 22d. Chapter of the same Gospel, where he observes that in his ancient manuscript Copy to which he gives the title of *Veneranda vetustatis Codex*; a part of the 44th. Verse and the whole 20th. Verse are not, so that all the following words are wanting in this Copy, (*which is shed for you, doe this in remembrance of me*) in taking likewise the Cup after Supper, he said to them, (*This Cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you*) he believes there is some transposition in these words, and that for to form a true sense the 19th. and 20th. Verses ought to be immediately joined to the 16th. at the same time he adds, that he has observ'd two transpositions much like these in the *Apocalypse*.

It is needless for me to stay any longer on this Subject, since every one may consult *Beza's* Notes, where will be found abundance of varieties either additions, omissions, or alterations, and what is yet more considerable is that the Authour does not onely relate the divers readings which he has found in ancient manuscript Copies, and in the Commentaries of the Fathers; he consults moreover the old Interpreters, who have without doubt made their Translations from the Greek, and draws from thence many different readings, whence I finally conclude, that I had reason to give an account in this historical Criticisme of the state of the Hebrew Text, not onely from old Manuscripts but likewise from ancient Translations, which may often serve instead of old Copies.

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Since then it would be ridiculous to set up a particular providence of God for the preservation of the Hebrew more than the Greek Copies of the New Testament, we ought freely to acknowledge that men having been the depositories of one as well as the other, it was impossible but that some errors should creep in by the means of Transcribers, and we ought not to imagine that all these divers readings are in the printed Books, for if we consult the old Manuscripts, we shall discover a far greater number, as *Beza* himself has observed in one of his Letters to the University of Cambridge; where he owns that his manuscript Copy of the Evangelists which was very old, furnish't him with many other variations which he had omitted that he might give offence to none. The same *Beza* has likewise made no scruple, by the help of these Manuscripts, to defend in many places our vulgar Translation, and to shelter it from the unjust censures of *Erasmus*. In which those of *Geneva* have been to blame so often to vary from the ancient Latin Interpreter contrary to the opinion of *Beza*, who does not always in his Notes follow the Greek Copy at this day used.

One may likewise wonder that the English Authour, who a while since printed at Oxford the New Testament in Greek with all the various readings which he could procure, durst say in his Preface, *That all the variations of the different Greek Copies were of no moment*, as if he had produc'd them all, and as if there were not many others more considerable in *Beza's* Remarks on the New Testament. I thought it was very proper for me to make this Observation to undeceive abundance of Protestants who are of the same opinion with the aforesaid English Authour, untill I should publish the Second Part of this Work which will contain the History of the Books of the New Testament.

Furthermore the most learned Protestants are not at all scandaliz'd to see all these variations in the Texts of the Bible. *Scaliger* moreover says one ought not to be surpris'd at the confusion of the order which is in many places of the Scripture although we are ignorant of the reasons, because it signifies very little, as long as we find the truth, *Quo ordine quid referatur, modo constet veritas, aut nibili aut parum interest*. The Jews themselves, who are therefore called *Caraites*, because they receive nothing but the Scriptures for the Foundation of their Religion, are likewise of the same opinion; which makes me think that the

*Beza in Ep. ad Ac. Cant. An. 1583.*

*Id. pref. in N. Test. An. 1559.*

*Scaliger.*

Catho-

Catholicks will not be offended either at the confusion of the order, or at the various readings which I have remark't in the Text of the Bible, since they submit themselves to the Church from whom they receive the holy Scriptures. So we see a Catholic Authour of our times has made no scruple to publish a French Translation of the New Testament with the various readings of several Copies, the best part of which he has translated into French. This Work has been approved by many Bishops, and the Authour testifies that the general Assembly of the Clergy of *France*, in the year 1655. engaged him to that undertaking.

The Second Book of this Criticisme contains the History of the chief Translations of the Bible, which have been made both by the Jews and by the Christians. We have examin'd all those different Translations by marking as exactly as we could both their perfections and their faults: we are nevertheless much more copious upon the Greek Translation of the Septuagint and the vulgar Latin one than upon all the rest, by reason the Church has consecrated these two to her Service, and declared them authentick. I have justified them in many places against the modern Interpreters who have not had a sufficient knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue to judge rightly of these ancient Translations.

I have likewise thought that it was necessary for me to examine thoroughly the new Latin Translation of *S. Jerome*, and to see if he had all along done the Septuagint justice, the Translation of which was generally approved of through the whole Church. I have followed the same method in what relates to the modern Interpreters, and comparing their Translations from the Hebrew with our vulgar one, I have shewn that they have very often deviated without cause. One will likewise find in this History the Criticisms of the Translations which have been made by the Protestants, of which there are a great many in all sorts of Languages: Finally, besides these many Translations of the Bible which we use in the Western Churches, whether Catholicks or Protestants, I have examin'd those which are in use in the Eastern. And have search't the Jews even to their Synagogues, that I might examine their Translations, of which they have a great number in most Languages.

As it would be very dangerous to expose the disease without applying at the same time a necessary remedy, after having set down

P. Amel.

down the good and evil qualities of most of the Translations of the Bible, I have chalk't out in the beginning of my third Book a method which we ought to observe in the translation of the Scripture, more exact than any we have hitherto had. There are indeed many difficulties arise in the execution of this Project, but it is not impossible to surmount them all in following the rules which I prescribe. I have join'd to this project the Criticisme of the principal Authours whether Jews or Christians, who have explain'd the holy Scripture; so that one may see in one instant the different ways of interpreting the Bible, as well in the Church as Synagogue; and that this Work might be more usefull I have annex't to it a great many reflexions, which contain divers rules for the well expounding of the Scripture. Lastly, I have placed at the end of this Work a Catalogue of the best Bibles which have been printed either by Jews or Christians, adding some critical Remarks upon the chief Translations.

## CHAP. II.

*Who were the Authours of the holy Scriptures, and what was the office of the Prophets among the Hebrews. The liberty which those Prophets had to add or diminish to these holy Books.*

THE Republick of the Hebrews differs in this from all other States in the world, in that she never acknowledged any other Head than God himself, who continued in this quality to govern her in those very times when she was subject to Kings. 'Tis this which has acquir'd it the title of *The Holy and Divine Republick*, and those people have likewise assum'd to themselves the title of *Holy*, that they might by this glorious name be distinguish't from other Nations. 'Twas for this reason also that God himself gave Laws, by the ministry of *Moses* and of other Prophets who succeeded him, to a People he had chosen to be intirely at his service.

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That we may better understand in what nature these Prophets were whom God made use of to be his Interpreters among the Hebrews, we shall take notice that in well govern'd States, chiefly in the East, there were always certain persons who took care to put into writing the most important affairs of the Republick, and to preserve the Acts in the Registeries set apart for that purpose. We learn from the Books of *Esther* and *Esdra*s, from *Josephus* and *Diodorus Siculus*, that this custom was long since observed in *Persia*. The Ægyptians, among whom *Moses* had been bred up, had Priests to whom they gave the name of Scribes or Writers of holy Things, because in effect their principal business was to put into writing what concerned the State and Religion, and to publish it when it was thought necessary.

Diod.  
Joseph.

*Diodorus Siculus* seems to recommend his History by the Acts which he has drawn from the Ægyptians, whereas most of those who had writ before him the History of *Greece* had onely set down fabulous Originals, by reason that *Greece* never had the care to keep in Registeries, as the Ægyptians did, the Acts of what passed among them. The Originals even of *Rome* contain almost nothing true, because the use of Registeries came in but very late amongst the Romans.

Greece.

Rome.

It is probable that *Moses*, who had been bred up as we said in the Court of *Ægypt*, and in whom were all the qualities of a perfect Law-giver, establish'd from the very infancy of the Republick this sort of Scribes, whom we may call publick or divine Writers, to distinguish them from particular Writers, who seldom meddle with the writing the History of their own times but through motives of interest. 'Tis this which made *Josephus* say, that amongst the Jews every one was not permitted to write Annals, but that was reserved to the Prophets onely, who knew things future and far from them by divine inspiration, and who writ likewise what happened in their own time. *Eusebius* confirms this Opinion when he observes that amongst the Hebrews it did not belong to all sorts of people to judge of those who were directed by the Divine Spirit to write the sacred Scriptures, but that there were a select number of persons who had that Implyment inspired by God, to whom alone it was left to judge of holy and prophetick Writing, and to reject those which were not so.

Joseph. lib. 2.  
centr. App.Euseb. pr. ep.  
Ev. iij.

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Those who had the charge of this Affair, were called Prophets, according to *Josephus*, and I believe that this is the reason why the Jews at this day call the most part of the historical Books of the Bible propheticall, because they had been written by persons whom they termed Prophets: *S. Peter* calls the whole Scripture likewise Prophecy. *Samuel*, *Nathan*, *Gad*, *Abijah*, *Ado* and some others, who had collected the Annals of their times, are for this very reason in the Scripture called *Prophets*, where there yet remain some fragments of their ancient Acts or Prophecies, chiefly in the Book of *Chronicles*: 'tis this which *Theodoret* more particularly explains in his Preface to the History of *Kings*, where he describes the nature of these Prophets, who were charg'd to put into writing the most important actions which past in the Republick of the Hebrews: and he pretends that other Writers, who lived long time after these first Prophets, have afterwards collected those ancient Acts, to which they have added other Histories of things which had happened in their own times. Wherefore we have at present nothing besides the names of many Prophets whose Books or Records have been lost, as *Theodoret* has judiciously observed in the same Preface. The Hebrew word *Nabi*, which the Septuagint has translated *Prophet*, signifies nothing in its original but *Oratour*, or a person that speaks in publick, in effect the Prophets among the Hebrews were publick Oratours; who in quality of God's Interpreters, pronounced his will to the People; and they were at the same time charg'd, as *Josephus*, and besides him some Fathers observe, to write the most important affairs of State, and to keep the Acts in the Registeries, whence afterwards the holy Books were taken, which have since been called Prophecy.

Pet. 2. ch. 1.  
1. v. 21.Theod. pref.  
in 1. b. Reg.

Nabi.

It is then very probable that there were from *Moses's* time these sorts of Prophets, which were necessary in the State to collect the Acts which past in the Republick. This being suppos'd, we shall distinguish in the Five Books of the Law, what has been writ by *Moses* from what has been writ by these Prophets or publick Writers. We may attribute to *Moses* the Commandments and Ordinances which he gave to the People, and allow these same publick Writers to be the Authours of the greatest part of the History. *Moses* in quality of Legislatour writ all which relates to the Statutes, and left to the Scribes or Prophets the care of collecting the Acts of the most material transactions which past,

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that they might be preserved to posterity. So we see that the words *Scribes* and *Prophets* are synonymous in the Chaldaick Paraphrase.

The manner of the composing the History contain'd in the *Pentateuch* seems to insinuate this truth; because most of the actions are set down in such a way that one would believe that some other than *Moses* reduced those Annals into order. I shall not dwell upon the proofs which some have produc't to shew that *Moses* was not the Authour of the *Pentateuch*, because he would not have spoke, say they, of himself in a third person, nor publish't his own praises. I shall not, I say, stick upon these proofs, since it is common with other Authours: *Cæsar* speaks of himself in the third person in his Commentaries, *Josephus* does the same thing in his History of the Wars of the Jews against the Romans, and moreover he writes his own Elogy. But if we consider with never so little attention the whole body of the *Pentateuch*, we may observe this diversity of Writers which I speak of, which will appear more in the sequel of this Discourse, where I evidently make the falsity of the reasons appear which the Jews use to prove that *Moses* is the Authour of the whole Law.

According to this Principle we ought to expound that passage where it is said that *Moses wrote what God commanded him*; for there is nothing more ordinary in the Scripture than to ascribe to one person what he orders another to doe, chiefly when the thing is done in his name: 'tis thus we ought to interpret that passage of *Genesis*, where it is said that, *God made unto Adam and Eve coats of skins and that he clothed them therewith*; which signifies that God commanded them to make themselves habits and cloath themselves therewith.

Whence it is that *Isaac Abravanel*, a learned Spanish Jew, strongly maintains the Principle which we have mentioned touching these Prophets or publick Writers, who took care to collect the Acts of what past in the State; and he pretends moreover that they did not onely write the History of their times, but that they took the liberty of adding or diminishing what they thought fit from the Records of the other Prophets which went before them. This is likewise the Sentiment of *Procopius*, *Theodoret* and some other Fathers. *Procopius* observes in his *Scholias* upon the Books of the *Kings* that the Authours of these Books and those of the *Chronicles* have taken their History from more ancient Acts from whence they have composed their Works.

*Theodo-*

*Cæsar.*  
*Joseph.*

*Gen. 3.*

*Abrav. prof.*  
*super Job.*

*Theod. l. b. 2.*  
*Reg. Inst. 4.*  
*Procop.*  
*lib. 2.*  
*Reg. ca. 16.*  
*Id. lib. 3.*  
*S. l. 11.*

*Theodoret*, who explains himself more at large upon this Subject, assures us that the History of *Kings*, as it is now, has been drawn from many other prophetick Writings, so that it is nothing but a collection of the Acts which had been compiled by the Prophets or publick Writers, who had gone before and were charg'd to put into writing what happened in their times. These sorts of Collections are called in the Scripture, *Dibri Hamin*, or *Day-books*, and it is in this sense we ought to understand the words of the first Book of *Kings*, *The rest of the Acts of Solomon, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon?* There is nothing more ordinary in the Book of *Kings* and *Chronicles* than this last expression, whence it evidently appears that the most part of the holy Scriptures that are come to us, are but *Abridgments* and as *Summaries* of ancient Acts which were kept in the Registeries of the Hebrews.

*Massius Pererius* the Jesuit, and some other orthodox Authours, have made no difficulty to receive these publick Writers, as we shall find in the sequel of this History, and 'twould be dangerous to correct one Book of the Scripture by another, when they do not altogether agree among themselves, because every Prophet making his own Collections has had particular reasons to change, add, or diminish, according to times and occasions, we cannot methinks bring a better reason than that to explain the difference betwixt the *Chronicles* and the other historical Books of the Bible, where the same Acts are diversly reported.

I know 'tis expressly forbidden in *Deuteronomy* either to add or diminish any thing from the word of God, but we may answer with the Authour of the Book intituled *Cozri*, that this prohibition relates onely to private persons, and not to those whom God had expressly commanded to interpret his will. God has promised to the Prophets and to the Judges of the *Sanhedrim*, who succeeded *Moses*, the same grace and the same spirit of Prophecy as those had who lived in his time, and therefore they have held the same power, not onely of interpreting the Law, but also of making new Ordinances, which were afterwards writ and placed in the Registeries of the Republick: shall we say for example that *Samuel* and *David* have changed the Law, because they created new Officers to serve in the Tabernacle? shall we condemn *Solomon* as an Innovatour, because in building the Temple he left out some things that *Moses* ordain'd for the, Taber-

*Lib. 1.*  
*Reg. cap. 11.*  
*Verse 41.*

*Mat. Perer.*

Tabernacle, and on the other hand added others? in fine, we must not accuse *Esdra*s, or him who has made the Collections of the *Chronicles*, as a man who has corrupted the holy Scriptures, because he has related a great many things otherwise than they are reported in the other Books of the Bible. The Principle of *Abravanel*, which is confirmed by some Fathers, resolves all these difficulties. These Books, being reviewed by the *Sanhedrim*, or by other persons inspired by God, had all the necessary Authority that could be desired in an affair of this importance.

*Abravanel* is so far persuaded of the truth of his Principle that he dares deny, contrary to the Sentiment of the Doctours in the *Talmud*, that *Joshua* and *Samuel* are the Authours of the Books which bear their names; and he assures us that, notwithstanding the testimony of his Fathers, *Samuel* is the Authour of the Book of *Joshua* and that of *Judges*; he ascribes moreover the Books of *Samuel* and *Kings* to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who, according to him, did compile them out of the Records of *Samuel*, *Nathan*, *Gad*, and other Prophets or publick Writers which lived before him. However this is most certain that *Joshua* and *Samuel* could never put down in their Books acts and expressions which manifestly suppose them to be dead, and consequently if they composed those Histories which we have under those names it is absolutely necessary that something has been added, and we cannot methinks justify these additions but by establishing the Prophets or publick Writers of which we have already treated.

To proceed, we have in the Church a usage much like this which I have already explained, although the same Church has not the right of making Books Canonical and Divine as the Prophets had in the Old Testament, but onely to declare them Canonical. It is certain that the first general Councils have abided by their definitions, and enacted that nothing that respected matters of Faith, should be contrary to their Decisions, and yet nevertheless the latter Councils have added many things for a further illustration. It is the same with the Prophets who succeeded one another in the Old Testament, the latter have collected the Acts of the former, and adding some illustrations, yet cannot be said for all that to have added to the word of God.

We may further prove this liberty the Prophets had in adding any thing to the holy Scripture from the last Chapter of *Joshua*,

*Joshua*, where it is said that after he had renewed the Covenant of God with the Israelites, and had given them the Commandments they were to obey, he writ all these things in the volume of the Law that they might be observed: we ought not to imagine that *Joshua* writ these Ordinances himself, but that he caused them to be written by publick Writers, who had the charge of that Affair. Moreover when we say that *Joshua* added the words of this Covenant to the Law, it ought to be understood of all the *Sanhedrim*, over which he presided after the death of *Moses*: besides it is an ordinary custom among the Jews to name onely the Head of the Body for the whole Assembly over which he presideth. What we find in the end of *Deuteronomy* about the death of *Moses* ought to be explain'd after the same manner. And it is want of apprehending the style of the Scripture to make *Moses* a Prophet in this place as *Josephus* and *Philo* have pretended: in fine, I don't think that any one can deny that the Republick of the Jews has not had from time to time publick Writers, who have writ the most considerable things that pass among them; and who have preserved the Acts which then had the publick Authority when they were allow'd, as *Eusebius* observes by those who were charged with that employment.

The common Opinion of the Fathers, who believe that the Collection of the Old Testament as now extant was composed by *Esdra*s, confirms what I have been saying. For *Esdra*s could not re-establish those Books, which, according to them, had been corrupted in time of Captivity, but in quality of Prophet or publick Writer, so is he termed in Scripture, the *Scribe* or *Writer*, by way of eminency: most of the Jews agree that the Records which *Esdra*s made use of in his Collection were corrupted by reason of the confusion which happened to their Books in the time of their Captivity. There is nevertheless this difference between the Opinion of the Fathers and that of the Jews in this point, that the former affirm that *Esdra*s corrected the errors which were in these Records, whereas the latter, being obliged to acknowledge that the Text of the Scripture as it is at present is defective, have rather chose to attribute these failours to the Copies from whence *Esdra*s has made his Collection than ingenuously to acknowledge that they have been negligent of their Books since that time.

## C H A P. III.

*The Origine of some changes in the Texts of the Bible.  
Reasons why the same Acts in different Books of the Bible  
are differently reported.*

THE Principle which we have establish't concerning the liberty which the Prophets or publick Writers had of changing some things in the holy Scriptures, ought to make us take care not to multiply so easily several readings in the Hebrew Text. For example, one can't say that in the New Testament the names of *Demas* and *Demetrius*, *Epaphras* and *Epaphroditus*, are different readings, but one is onely the abridgment of the other. As then the Authours of the New Testament have had the liberty to use indifferently the one or other, we ought not to think it strange that those who have made the Collection of the Old Testament have used the same freedom in many names which are writ very differently, according to the different places where they are mentioned. Wherefore we ought not to attribute all these differences to the negligence of Transcribers, since part of them may be ascribed to those who have compiled the Records themselves; and that which confirms this Opinion is, that at that time they did not observe with such exactness as we do at present those little niceties of Grammar, the use of which has been but of late ages.

The Rabbins have recourse to our Principle to expound the reasons of these sorts of changes which are so frequent in the Bible. Thus *Simcon* Son of *Hemah* observes at the beginning of his Commentaries upon *Job*, that in the Scripture one word is very often plac't for another, especially when they signifie the same thing, and it is upon this account that *Isahar*, the Son of *Simeon*, is likewise called *Zarab*, because that these two words both signifie Light. According to *R. Aben Melech*, *Fethra* *Israelite* is the same with *Fether* *Ishmaelite*, who took the name of *Ishmaelite*, because he had dwelt among the *Ishmaelites*, but for fear he should be thought to be indeed of the race of the *Ishmaelites* he was called *Israelite*. This Rabbin brings many other reasons for these changes

Rai Sim.

R. Sim.

R. Aben.  
Mel.

changes of names, and he supposes that in that time they did not much heed the putting of one letter for another, chiefly when they had the same sound or same figure, and therefore according to the opinion of the Jews we ought to ascribe that difference rather to the variety of Orthography than to the error of the Transcriber. But it is to be feared they stretch this Principle a little too far, in ascribing it to such variations when it ought to be attributed to the Transcribers.

Nevertheless we have reason to doubt that the *Chaldee* Language, which they spoke after their return from *Babylon*, and comes very nigh the Hebrew, has wrought some changes in words, which appears manifestly in those which are writ with an *Aleph* in the end instead of an *He*, for the Chaldeans change the letter *He* into *Aleph*, and as the pronounciation is the same it has happened that these two letters have been easily confounded: this affinity of the two Languages has wrought many other changes in the Orthography, which one might explain by the example of the different Dialects of the Greek Tongue: one cannot therefore deny but a good part of these variations proceed from the negligence of Transcribers, and this I have observed in comparing together many Hebrew Manuscripts.

'Tis likewise usual, if we refer our selves to the Jews, to take the liberty of cutting off or enlarging several names for different reasons, which happens very often in succeeding Ages: and it may be that those who have collected the ancient Records have us'd in one place an old word and in another place a new way of writing or pronouncing that very same word. According to this Rule *R. Levi Ben Gerson* affirms that *Fabets* writ by an *Ain* is the same with *Abetsan* writ by an *Aleph*; so that these two letters are pronounc'd almost the same way. There is nothing more ordinary than these kinds of observations in the Books of the Rabbins *Juda*, *Jona*, *Kimhi* and other Jewish Grammarians: we find even in the European Languages many examples, as it is easie to shew by the different Dialects of the Spanish and French Tongues. The Gascoins use a *B* where we pronounce an *V* and the Italians pronounce very often a *G* for our *C*; for they say *Gabinet* instead of *Cabinet*; which change is not strange to the Jews, there being many words in the Hebrew Texts of the Bible which it is hard to explain, but by taking these two letters one for the other.

R. Levi.

R. R. Juda,  
Jona, Kimhi.

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It is impossible to make a good Translation of the Scripture without knowing the reasons of all these changes, whether they proceed from the Transcribers, or those who compiled the ancient Records, and have left the words as they found them without troubling themselves with that exactness of Orthography which was in use before the Captivity.

That which would make one believe that things have sometimes happened thus, is that the uniformity of Orthography is generally kept in the same Book, and that the variation is seldom found but in different Books, whereas if the change came always from Transcribers there would not be so much uniformity: thus it is that the same person which is called *Batséva* Daughter of *Amiel* in the *Chronicles*, is called in the Second Book of *Samuel* *Batséba* Daughter of *Eliam*, by changing the letter of *v* into *b* in the first word, and by transposition of the letters in the second. It is probable that had this change been an error of Transcribers the one would have been reformed by the other, but following the opinion that proper names change often according to times and places it durst not be done.

Moreover the changes are very frequent when the words are synonymous, as may be seen in the names *Isboset* and *Esbaal*, for he who is called *Isboset* in the first Book of *Kings*, is called *Esbaal* in the *Chronicles*, because *Boset* and *Baal* are terms synonymous in the Scripture, according to the observation of *Aben Melec*, who proves it by other passages. *Gideon* is likewise for the same reason called *Ferubbaal* and *Feruboset*. We don't think strange that *Bethel*, which signifies the *House of God*, should likewise be called in the Scripture *Bethaven*, which signifies an *House of Iniquity* or of an *Idol*: we don't think it strange, I say, because we see the reasons for it in the same Scripture.

It is the same with most of the other changes, although the reasons are hid from us, and we ought to judge of those which are unknown by those which are, since these last sufficiently prove the liberty the publick Writers had, to order the holy Scriptures in making their Collection. If we had the Annals of the Kings of *Judah* and *Israel*, whence *Esdras* has taken the best part of his Chronological History, we might without doubt find a great deal of light to resolve the difficulties which we meet with upon this Subject, but we want these ancient Histories which had been collected by the Prophets; nay moreover we have but abridgements of what is come down to our hands.

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'Tis certain that *Isaiah* compos'd a whole History of the Reign of *Orzias*, which we have not; and a Book of the Wars of the Lord, of which mention is made in the *Numbers*, is an evident proof that the Histories which are related in the five Books of *Moses*, have likewise been taken out of several Collections which have been lost. We want likewise some Prophecies, and none can assure us that those that are come down to us are complete. The Prophecies of *Jonas*, of which mention is made in the second Book of *Kings*, are altogether unknown.

Besides the changes we have already treated of there are others more considerable, which we ought to ascribe to the liberty which was taken by those who made the Collection of the Records, and compos'd a body of Scripture for the publick use, fitting them to their own times and design; which is usual with those who abridge the Books of others: wherefore it is hard to explain why those who have made a collection of every Book of the Bible in particular, have spoke but of certain Acts, without touching upon others more remarkable; what can we say in this case but that what we have at present is but an abridgment of the ancient Records, which were much larger, and that those who made the abridgments had particular reasons which we cannot understand.

It is better therefore to be silent in this Subject and to keep to the general reasons we have related than to search farther into this matter, and condemn by a rash Criticisme what we do not understand.

It will be very hard for example to tell why he who has made a collection of the Books of *Samuel* has writ onely of matters of the smallest importance, and that he has not treated of the chief actions of *David*, which nevertheless the *Chronicles*, which are in the main but an abridgment of other Books, make mention of: there's the same difficulty in the History of the *Kings*, where many considerable Acts are omitted, which nevertheless are related in the *Chronicles*: we cannot say that *Esdras*, or he who compil'd the *Chronicles*, has of himself added them, since he onely made use of the ancient Records that were left, and of which the Books of *Samuel* and *Kings* make mention. We must then necessarily conclude, that each compiler has made his Collection according as he first propos'd to himself, and that he has abridg'd the matter according to the design he then had.

We ought likewise to ascribe the changes which we meet with in the reporting of one and the same act in different Books of the Bible to the same cause. And there are particular reasons for every one of these several repetitions. Thus it is that he who collected the Books of *Samuel* thought that having spoke of the Fights and Victories of *David*, it was necessary to insert into his Collection the Song wherein *David* gives thanks to God for the favour he received from him, and for the quiet he enjoyed after he had vanquish't his Enemies. These same Songs, which particularly concern Fights and Victories, have nevertheless been collected and placed with others in a separate Volume, which is called *The Book of Psalms*.

We ought to make the same judgment of the History of *Ezechias* as it is in the History of the *Kings* and the Prophecy of *Isaiab*. The Prophet or publick Writer who compiled the historical Books, which we call the Book of *Kings*, has publish't this History that the person and actions of King *Ezechiah* might be known.

We find likewise in the Prophecy of *Jeremiah* some discourses which are in the Book of *Kings*, which yet cannot be called a vain repetition. Furthermore we ought to take notice that those who have been the Authours of these Collections did not think they were obliged to copy other mens Writings with the same exactness as bare Transcribers are tied to, who have not the liberty of deviating never so little from the Original. From hence we may give a reason of the divers relations of the same act in several places; at least a good part of them, by this means may be explained. I don't intend to justify all, being perswaded there are many that proceed from the Transcribers: But this is not a place to treat of these later variations, which we shall mention elsewhere.

## CHAP. IV.

*A more particular Explanation of the changes which have happen'd to the holy Scriptures, especially since the Captivity. The opinions of the Fathers and Rabbins upon this Subject. How the Collection of the Bible has been made.*

**A**Lthough the Jews after their return from their Captivity seemed to have called those Prophets who were charg'd with the writing of things of most importance in the State, and to collect the Records which were in their Registeries, they nevertheless had these same publick Writers, whom they called *Sopherim*, which signifies *Scribes* or *Writers*. It is the title which is given to *Esdra*s in the holy Scripture, as if he were the chief of those publick Writers, who labour'd for the re-settling the holy Books after the return of the Jews from *Babylon* to *Jerusalem*.

We ought not to give too much credit to what the Jewish Doctors in the *Talmud* say of the Authours of every particular Book in the Bible, for they have never examin'd this matter with attention, so that *Isaac Abravanel* was oblig'd to forsake their opinion upon this Subject: but I believe it is unnecessary to inquire with too much niceness the particular Authours of each Book, because we can make but very uncertain conjectures. It is sufficient that we know in general that these Books have been written by Prophets to whom the Republick had committed this care, and that they were publish't by the authority of the *Sanhedrim*, or of those who were inspired by God for that purpose, as *Eusebius* observes. It signifies very little whether they be called Prophets or Writers, so it be but certain that, during the Republick of the Hebrews, there were necessarily these sorts of Prophets or publick Writers, whose qualities we have described.

These last Writers having gathered together under *Esdra*s, as it is commonly thought, all the ancient Records which they could find, whether they abridged or whether they added something, 'tis hard to distinguish the changes they made from those

from those which every particular Prophet had made before them, in the Works which they so collected from the Records of their Predecessours, and which were kept in the Registeries. The reasons which *Abravanel* gives to shew that *Joshua* and *Samuel* are not Authours of those Books that go under their names, at least after the manner we have them at present, seem to be very convincing, but they do not sufficiently prove that *Samuel* is the Authour of the Book of *Joshua*, and *Jeremiah* of that which goes under the name of *Samuel*, as the same *Abravanel* pretends. The proofs of this Rabbin consist chiefly herein, that in the Books of *Joshua* and *Samuel* there is mention made of certain things which happened not till after their death, but it may be those who have made the last collection of the sacred Books have put in these additions, being assured that there were before that others likewise inserted. It is nevertheless very probable that *Jeremiah* made the collection of the *Kings*, and that he has plac'd at the beginning of this History the Book of *Samuel*, adding what he thought necessary for a further illustration.

However it is, we have no evident tokens to distinguish these first changes or additions from the latter, which are commonly ascribed to *Esdra*s, or rather to the Assembly over which he presided after the return from *Babylon*, when the making of a body of Scripture was propounded which might serve for a Rule to the Jews. The most learned Rabbins who understand the errors in the Bible, ascribe them to the Copies *Esdra*s made use of in making his Collection, and they pretend these Copies were faulty, and he join'd together the Records he found without correcting them, so that in some places the sense remains imperfect, and in others there are repetitions of the same thing, which seem rather to be the explanations of the Text than the words of the Text it self. By this means it is easie for them to give reasons for many of the repetitions that are in the Scripture, and of abundance of synonimous words which all signifie but the same thing. But it is likely they have embraced this Opinion, onely to authorize these pretended errors of the sacred Text, by attributing them to *Esdra*s, as if in course of time no considerable changes had happened through the fault of Transcribers. It is nevertheless certain that *Esdra*s had the power of correcting what he thought defective in the Records, and of adding what he thought necessary. Nay, it cannot be deny'd  
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*Abrav. in  
pres. sup.  
Joah.*

*Rabbins.*

but that he has done it, but what puzz'd the Jews in this business is, that they find in the Text now extant certain things which they can give no reason for, but by attributing them to Copies which they pretend *Esdra*s made use of in making his collection of the holy Scriptures.

It is not necessary for us to abide by the ancient Jewish Doctors, who mention the variety that was in the divers Copies from *Esdra*s his time. They tell us of three different ones. But as the Talmudists were not very understanding in this Criticisme, Talmud. the Rabbins who apply'd themselves to this sort of study ought rather to be consulted than these allegorical Doctours. *R. David Kimhi*, *R. Aben Melech* and some others, have found such R. Kimhi. Aben. great difficulties in the Books of *Chronicles*, chiefly in what relates to the Genealogies, that, after having attempted to resolve them several ways, they have been forc't to confess, that the Copies from which *Esdra*s made his Collection were faulty: so likewise there are very few Jews who have dar'd to make Commentaries upon the *Chronicles*. *Kimhi* observes that he has R. Kimhi. seen but one which he found at *Narbon*, and he does not much esteem that, because it was full of allegories, which are unnecessary for the literal explanation of the Text. *Don Joseph*, a Spanish Jew, who has writ upon these very Books, has found them Don Jos. so intricate, that he has said nothing but doubtfully. This Rabbi having understood that part of the Genealogies was imperfect and uncertain, by comparing them with the Books of *Genesis*, *Joshua*, *Samuel* and the *Kings*, where they are likewise set down, is forc't to say that *Esdra*s found the Families which he speaks of abridg'd, and that he has given them in the same manner as he found them. Moreover the same Authour, having examin'd the great variety both in the names and things themselves, adds, that we ought not to wonder at it, because it is usual in course of time for both names and things to change, he concludes that *Esdra*s has copy'd every thing as he could collect it, a little from one part and a little from another, and that this is the true reason why he does not always make a direct and methodical Genealogy, and farther to maintain his Opinion he asserts that the Jews had then lost the order of their Genealogies, and that *Esdra*s collected what he could find, although that was often without order, and twice repeated.

*R. Levi*

R. Levi.

R. *Levi Ben Gerson*, who has made a Commentary on the *Chronicles*, doubts almost thoroughout, and ordinarily makes use of these expressions, *methinks, perhaps, it may be,* and other such like, so fully perswaded was he that it was very hard to resolve the difficulties contain'd in these Books. R. *David Kimhi* shews indeed more subtilty than the other Rabbins in the Commentaries he has made on the same Books, but he is sometimes forced to blame the Records which *Esdra*s made use of in his Collection. *Aben Melech*, who had abridg'd the Works of those who had gone before him, finds likewise no better way to explain all these difficulties, than by saying with many others, that from the time of *Esdra*s there were many variations in the Hebrew Copies which have not been amended by the said *Esdra*s, nor by any other Writer of those times, they being contented to put out their Books as correct as possibly they could from the Records which they had. These same Jews add that they did not at that time much trouble themselves with that exactness of Orthography, nor those little punctilio's which at present we seriously apply our selves to to render the Copies of the Bible more correct.

The most learned Jews do agree, that the Hebrew Text of the Bible is at present faulty, but it is likely they err in throwing what they count amiss upon the Records which *Esdra*s made use of. It is more proper to blame the Jewish Translatours, rather than those who compos'd the body of the Scriptures, which we call canonical. There are clear examples of omissions which could not come but through Transcribers, and which one may easily supply by other Books, and if we had the ancient Records by which this Collection was made, it would be more easie to correct these omissions. The Fathers partly agree with the Jews touching the disorder which happened to the Hebrew Copies during the time of Captivity, but they will by no means allow that *Esdra*s has done any thing else but join'd them together with their imperfections. *Bellarmino*, who has examin'd the sense of the Fathers in this point is of this judgment, that we ought not to follow the opinion of those who believe that the Books were intirely lost in their exile, and that *Esdra*s dictated new ones: Then he adds, that the Fathers, who had treated best on this Subject, have plainly affirmed that *Esdra*s did nothing but gather together the Copies which were left, and corrected them  
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Bell. lib. 2.  
de Verb. Den.

in the corrupt places. This agrees with the opinion of *Theodoret*,<sup>Theod. pref. in P.</sup> who affirms that *Esdra*s revised the places in the sacred Scripture where any errors were crept in, either through negligence of the Jews or impiety of the Babylonians. *Clemens Alexandrinus*<sup>Clem. Alex. lib. 1. Strom.</sup> calls this Collection, which is attributed to *Esdra*s, *Anagnorismos*, or *Revision*. 'Tis for this reason that *S. Jerome*, writing against *Helvidius*, dares not absolutely cite the Books of the Law under *Moses* his name, but uses these expressions, *Whether you'l say that Moses was the Authour of the Pentateuch, or that Esdras establish'd it is indifferent to me*: in effect the passage he cites in that place was not *Moses*'s, although it is found among the Books which are called his.

This last opinion of the Fathers ought to be preferr'd before that of the Jews, who have so far carried their principles, as boldly to affirm that the several readings we find in the Hebrew Text were from *Esdra*s his time, which has not the least shadow of reason, as we shall plainly shew in the sequel of this Book, where we will particularly set forth the rise of these several readings. But most of the Jews, applying themselves but little to the Criticism of the Scripture, and yet desirous to resolve all the difficulties contained therein, have had recourse to two great Principles, which are mount *Sinai* and the *great Assembly*, which according to them was held under *Esdra*s. When they have nothing to say to the doubts that are propos'd to them, they answer that it is a constant Tradition which is come from mount *Sinai* to them by succession of time. Thus they make *Moses* the Authour of their dreams, and when the things in question are manifestly since *Moses* time, they have recourse to the great Synagogue or Assembly, of which *Esdra*s was chief, and by this means they always hide their ignorance. In sum, whether these defaults pretended by the Jews come from the corruption of the Copies *Esdra*s made use of as the Rabbins believe, or whether they come from Transcribers as we suppose, it cannot be deny'd but they are very ancient, seeing most of them are found in the Greek Septuagint Translation.

There are nevertheless some things which may rather be attributed to them who have made a Collection of the sacred Scripture than to the Transcribers; as the frequent repetitions, and synonymous terms which seem to be added by way of explanation. This evidently appears in the Collection which has been  
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made

Proverbs.

made of Proverbs, where there are many that express but the same thing, and which might have been omitted, unless we say that the Transcribers have repeated them. But to me it appears more probable that these Proverbs have been gathered together from several Copies, where these repetitions were, and that those who compiled them did not trouble themselves with leaving out what seem'd unnecessary because it serv'd for illustration. They have onely added some links to join them better together, and to make but one body of them. The first Verse of the 25th. of *Proverbs* is thus, and these words [*These are also the Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah copied out.*] can be onely his who has writ them down to form the Collection which we have, being before dispers't in different Copies.

Cai. com. in  
Parab. Sol.

'Tis the same with the Prophecies, which have not altogether been compos'd by the Prophets in the manner as they are at present, but those who have collected them have insert'd other acts, relating to some Histories that serv'd for illustration of these Prophecies. To which may be added what is in the beginning of every Prophecy, and even in other Books of the Bible by way of title, where we see the names of the Authours set down at the beginning, with some words that belong to the History of that time. According to this maxime the reflection *Cajaitan* has made upon the first words of the *Proverbs of Solomon*, are not to be much regarded, where he observes that *Solomon* is the first of the Hebrew Writers who has put his name to the beginning of his Book, and that the Prophets afterwards imitated him. It is more likely that these titles and several other such things have been added by the Authour of the Collection of the Bible, as in the same manner titles to most of the *Psalms* have been annexed. Which is easie to be known by the diversity of the style of the two first Chapters of *Job*, which have been put at the beginning of this Poem by way of Argument or Prologue. Moreover what has been insert'd in this same Poem, to shew the different persons who speak, has given very great light unto it, whereas there's much confusion in the Book of *Canticles*, where it is very hard to distinguish the Speakers by reason they have not been pointed out.

Cantic.

That we may better understand whence the beginning of these Prophecies we have spoke of proceeded, we shall observe that the Prophets had not onely the care of collecting the considerable

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rable acts which pass in the State, and of writing the holy Scriptures; but in quality of publick Oratours they preached before the people as the necessities of the State required. They foretold the evils with which it was threatn'd, and God made use of them to declare his will, and reveal his most secret counsels.

These Sermons or Prophecies were inroll'd and kept in Registries, as all other Acts were, several Copies whereof were distributed among the people, that they might read them and be instructed by such exhortations. When a body of all these was to be made, it was necessary to put them into order, and several acts have been insert'd which belong to the affairs of that time; these additions may easily be known by the bare reading of those Books. It sometimes falls out that the Authour of the Collection plainly discovers this by certain words which he adds the better to knit the Discourse together. There are nevertheless several omissions both in the Prophecies and other Books which I dare not attribute to the Authours of the Collection, being perswaded they proceed from the negligence of the Jews, who have not preserv'd the Texts of the Bible with sufficient care. There are for example in the Texts of *Jeremiah* many phrases so curtell'd that the sense of them cannot be found out but by supplying many words, or reversing the order of periods, and placing them in their proper station, which may nevertheless in some measure proceed from the particular style of the Writers. For there is a great deal of difference between the style of *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*. This last puts indifferently one Proposition for another, the *Fæminine* for the *Masculine*, the *Plural* for the *Singular*, and the *Singular* for the *Plural*, the *Præterperfect Tense* for the *Future*, and the *Future* for the *Præterperfect Tense*. But *Isaiah*, who was a person of Quality, seldom falls into these irregularities, his words are neat and well chosen, and he understands how to proportion his Discourse to the Subject he treats of. This made *S. Jerome* say that the expressions of *Isaiah* were clean and great, because he was a man of Quality, whereas *Jeremiah*, having been bred up in the Country among Peasants, had a low and rude style. Which hinders not, as the same Father remarks, but that he had the same spirit of Prophecy as the other Prophets who were more eloquent than he. For this reason it is that the Prophet *Amos* makes use of comparisons taken from Lions and other Creatures, because he had been bred up in the Forrests among those sort of Beasts.

Prophecies.

Hieronym.  
pres. in  
Isai. m. &  
Jerem.

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CHAP.



## C H A P. V.

*Proof of the additions and other changes which have been made in the Scripture, and particularly in the Pentateuch. Moses cannot be Authour of the Books which are attributed to him. Several Examples.*

**I**T is not difficult to bring other proofs to shew that *Moses* is not the onely Authour of the whole *Pentateuch* after the manner as we now have it. *S. Jerome*, as we have before remark't, durst not ascribe it wholly to him; and *Massius*, who is one of the most learned and judicious Interpreters of the Scripture we have had in these last Ages, has not stuck to say, that several things have been added to the Books of *Moses*; he acknowledges those publick Writers which we before spoke of, and *Pererius* the Jesuit is of *Massius* his opinion, because it seemed extreamly reasonable to him; this Jesuit believes that some of the Works of those publick Writers have been cull'd out and inserted into the holy Scriptures which we have at present. He does not likewise reject the reason which *Massius* brings to prove that the Books of *Moses* are not now in the same condition they were when *Moses* writ them, but his reasons consist chiefly in that we see in the *Pentateuch* other Books, Proverbs and Verses or Sentences quoted which none can doubt but were after *Moses*. The Authours of these Verses or Sentences are called *Moscelim*, that is to say, elegant or subtil Writers, who writ Books in Verse or rather in a short and sententious style. *Bonfrerius* the Jesuit attributes to other Writers than *Moses* many things which this Legislatour could not have writ but by the spirit of Prophecy. Shall we say for example that *Moses* is the Authour of the last Chapter of *Deuteronomy* where his Death and Burial are describ'd? I know that *Josephus* and *Philo* upon this occasion have recourse to Prophecy, but we ought not to believe him more than other Jews who ascribe the whole Law to *Moses* to render it more authentick.

We have already observ'd that *Joshua* added something to the Law, and moreover if *Moses* was the Authour of the *Pentateuch*, after

Jerom.  
Mallius in  
pres. Com.  
in Jos.

Perer. in  
pres. Com.  
in Gen.

Bonfr. Com.  
in Penta.

after the manner as it is at present writ, would he have used this way of speaking, *The Canaanite was then in the land?* 'Tis known that the *Canaanites* continued the possession of this Country here spoke of all the time of *Moses*, so that this could not be writ but after they had been driven out. The names of *Hebron* and *Dan* and some others which are in the *Pentateuch* were not in being in the time of *Moses*, it is likewise probable that he could not have writ these words (*And are the Kings that reign'd in the land of Edom before there reigned any King over the Children of Israel*) this manner of speaking supposes the establishment of Kings amongst the Hebrews: and *Bonfrerius* the Jesuit in expounding some Interpreters on this passage adds these words [ *I had rather say that another Writer has added something to Moses Books than to make him continually to pass for a Prophet.* ] I know that answers may be brought to most of these passages, and to some others unnecessary to be produc't, but by never so little reflection on those answers one may find them more subtil than true: and I do not believe that it is necessary or prudent to have recourse to these sort of solutions, since the most learned Fathers have freely acknowledged, that the *Pentateuch* at least as it is now could not wholly be *Moses's*.

Besides these ways of speaking and many other such like which *Moses* could never be the Authour of, there are many repetitions of the same thing in the *Pentateuch* which are apparently not *Moses's*, but rather theirs who have made a Collection of the holy Scriptures, and have join'd together several readings or explanations of the same words, not thinking it convenient to leave out of their Copies what might illustrate the Text. We may place in the number of these repetitions, the description of the Deluge, as it is in the 7th. Chapter of *Genesis* from the 17th. Verse to the 24th. it is said in the 17th. Verse that *the waters encreast and bare up the Ark, and it was lift up above the earth*, then in the 18th. Verse that *the waters prevailed and were encreased greatly upon the earth*, and Verse the 19th. *The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and that the high hills were covered*; which is again repeated in the 20th. Verse, where it is said that *the waters encreased fifteen cubits, whereby the mountains were covered*. It is probable that if onely one Authour had compos'd this Work he would have explained himself in fewer words, especially in a History. The 21st. 22d. 23d. Verses observe

Gen. c. 36.  
v. 31.

Gen. c. 36.  
v. 31.

observe

observe nothing but the same thing in synonymous terms.

It is said in the 21st. Verse that *all flesh which moved on the face of the earth died*, afterwards in the 22d. *all in whose nostrils was the breath of life upon the earth dy'd*, and 23d. Verse, *Every living substance was destroyed*: The number of the Animals which died is likewise repeated in the 21st. and 23d. Verses. 'Tis true there are three different words in these three Verses that signifie the Earth, but these three different words signifie nothing but the Earth, and the other expressions are likewise synonymous.

Exod.  
Levitic.

These repetitions are more frequent in *Exodus* and *Leviticus* than in *Genesis*, which is the reason that the Septuagint and vulgar Translation abridge sometimes the words and keep onely to the sense. I don't pretend to speak here of the repetitions of the same thing which are in different Chapters or in different Books of the Law, for there may be reasons for repeating the same thing in several places according to some new contingency, as we see in the Commandments or Ordinances of the Law. I speak onely of the repetitions that are in the same place, as in the 31st. of *Exodus*, where it is said in the 14th. Verse [*Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore for it is holy unto you, Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death, for whosoever doeth any work therein that soul shall be cut off from amongst his people.*] Then in the 15th. Verse immediately following these words [*Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest holy to the Lord, whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death:*] and in the 16th. Verse [*The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath.*] I am of opinion that we ought likewise to take these words of the 32d. Chapter 15th. Verse for synonymous terms: [*Moses went down from the Mount and the two Tables of the Testimony in his hands, the Tables were writ on both their sides, on the one side and the other were they writ.*] These ways of speaking writ of both sides, and writ on this side, and that, seem to be the same but differently exprest, yet nevertheless many both Jewish and Christian Interpreters have been very curious upon this passage, as well as several others where they have multiplied the Laws, the Actions and Miracles, because they have not sufficiently considered the style of the Scripture.

Exod. 32.

Levit. 3.

What difference can we find betwixt these words of the 3d. Chapter of *Leviticus* and the 4th. Verse [*the fat that covereth the*

*the inwards*] and these others in the same Verse [*all the fat which is upon the inwards*] they are likewise again repeated in the 14th. Verse. It is easie to understand such another repetition in the 16th. of *Exod.* 35th. Verse, where we read [*The Children of Israel did eat Manna 40 years, untill they came to a land inhabited,*] and afterwards [*they did eat Manna till they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.*] In fine, the Books of *Moses* are full of these sorts of repetitions, whereof some are rather explanations of what went before than repetitions, as in the same 16th. of *Exodus* 36th. Verse, where it is said [*The Omer is the tenth part of an Ephah:*] in the Scripture *Omer* and the tenth part of an *Ephah* are took indifferently one for another, and here the 36th. Verse is apparently but an explanation of the word *Omer* which is in the 33d. Verse, which cannot be methinks *Moses's* but theirs who have made a Collection of the *Pentateuch*, who have not thought it convenient to leave out these additions which they found in the Records, because they serv'd in some sort for illustration, and others they have added themselves to render the Text more intelligible. For this reason 'tis that in the 6th. Chapter of *Leviticus* Verse 9. the word *Burnt-offering* and explanation of it are join'd together, which happens also in several other places of the Scripture. We ought nevertheless to take heed that we speak not here of several repetitions which have as well their grace in the Book of *Moses* as in the Poems of *Homer*: as in the History of the Ark *Noah* repeats a good deal of what had been commanded him, this last repetition is the Authour's, and has been put down to shew the faithfull execution of the Commandment. *Moses* and *Homer* are much alike in this, which proceeds from their expression being always natural, and by consequence subject to such repetitions. We find likewise that even *Martial* could not forbear jesting upon *Homer* upon this occasion in one of his Epigrams.

Homer.

But there is another sort of repetition in the Books of *Moses* which renders the Text obscure, which is when the same thing is repeated in different places, at little distance one from the other, for then to find out the order in the words the sense is often changed, whereas it is to be suppos'd as certain that the order is very often neglected in the Scripture. For example, the History of the Deluge is very confus'd, chiefly in what relates to the time that the waters remained upon the earth; and

it is

it is likewise the same in the narration of the Rods which *Jacob* used to divide his Flocks from *Laban's*, and abundance of such like places, the explanation of which is hard, by reason of certain repetitions with some changes, that make one believe they are different things, although for the most part it is one and the same thing differently express'd in several places.

It may be nevertheless that good part of these repetitions belong to the Genius of the Hebrew Tongue, which is a very plain Language, and repeats often the same thing by different terms, which appears in almost all the Books of the Scripture, and which we find even in the Ordinances of our Kings, and in the style of the Chancery of *Rome*, as well as in the style of our Courts for civil Affairs, where several words are placed after one another which signify but the same thing. When these repetitions are not immediate after one another *S. Augustin* calls them Recapitulations, and in this most Interpreters have followed him, but whether these repetitions proceed from him who has collected the Records, and has let them alone because they serve for explanation, or whether they proceed from the Genius of the Hebrew Tongue, it is convenient to observe them for the better understanding the Scripture style.

I question likewise whether one should attribute to *Moses* or to the publick Writers which were in his time the little order which is to be found in some places of the *Pentateuch*, it is more probable that as in those times the Books were written upon little Scrolls or separate Sheets that were sow'd together, the order of these Sheets might be changed. And besides the Books of the Bible we have now, being onely an abridgment, the order of matters contained in them has not always been regarded. The Rabbins have endeavoured to excuse this by a Figure, which they call *Mukebam Meubar*, and is the same thing with *Hysteron Proteron* with the Greeks. It is true that the best Authours sometimes fall into little mistakes, so likewise do we not pretend to draw from thence an infallible consequence to prove that *Moses* could not be the Authour of the *Pentateuch* in the order that it is. It seems to me that the Jews themselves did not much regard writing in method, as it would be easie to prove by the style of the Epistles of *S. Paul*: And *Haron*, a *Carait* Jew, who has made literal Commentaries on the whole *Pentateuch*, observes often this confusion of order, which he calls *Haphuck*, and says that

S. Aug.

that it is usual enough in Scripture to begin with one thing, then to pass to another, and afterwards to resume again the first. A great many places in the Books of the Law where the order is confus'd make me think that those Books were not originally compos'd in that method. For example, can any one believe that an Historian should write the History of the Creation of Man with so little order as there is in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, where the same things are several times repeated without method, and as it were besides the purpose? and moreover after the Man and the Woman were created in the first Chapter and 27th. Verse, the Woman is supposed not to be made, and in the following Chapter the manner how she was taken from *Adam's* side is described, nevertheless in the same Chapter it was before forbidden him, as he was her Husband, whom she accompanied in the Garden, to eat the fruit of a certain Tree.

There is not more method observed in the other part of the Narration, which explains the Creation of other things, than in that of Man, and I do not know whether it is sufficient to say that all these repetitions are recapitulations, because they are very little remote one from the other. To understand the Books of *Moses* one must often join many Verses together by beginning with the last and coming up to the first. For example, to explain thoroughly the 3d, 4th, 5th Verses of the 21st Chapter of *Genesis*, one must begin at the 5th Verse, where it is said, *Abraham was an hundred years old when his Son Isaac was* Gen. 21. *born unto him*: then one must continue the sense by taking the 4th Verse, where it is said that *Abraham circumcised Isaac being eight days old*, and at last the History will be completed by the words of the 3d Verse, and *Abraham called the name of his Son Isaac*.

This order methinks the Historian ought to have kept for the Jews don't name their Children till after their Circumcision. The 46th Verse of the 31st Chapter of *Genesis* is methinks like- Gen. 31. wise out of its order as well as all the discourse which treats of the Covenant between *Jacob* and *Laban* because they did not eat till the Alliance was made. Likewise the death of *Isaac* which is related at the end of the 35th Chapter of *Genesis* seems to be out of its place, because *Isaac* died not at that time, and that *Joseph* was sold twelve years before the death



of *Isaac*, yet nevertheless the History of *Joseph* begins, but at the 37th Chapter of the same Book. There's no body in reading the words of the 38th of *Genesis* [*And it came to pass at that time that Judah went down from his brethren.*] but would at first believe that they were join'd with those that go before them, and that the time is related in which this action past. Nevertheless it is not so, and the most learned Interpreters of the Scripture agree that it happened at another time.

Exod. 18.

Those who do not sufficiently examin the style of the holy Scriptures, are subject to fall into great errors concerning the Chronology, and they trouble themselves in vain to find out a series in discourses where there is none. The History of *Jethro* which is related in the beginning of the 18th Chapter of *Exodus*, seems likewise not to be placed in the time wherein it was, forasmuch as *Jethro* seems not to have come till the second year after the finishing the Tabernacle, as may be prov'd out of *Deuteronomy*; and these sorts of expressions that render the sense hard, *In that time, in those days*, are meerly redundant, and have no relation to what goes before or comes after, which makes me believe that the Leaves or Scrolls on which these Books were writ have not been preserved in their first order. In the 46th of *Genesis*, where the Children of *Israel* are numbred who went into *Egypt* with him, these are accounted among them, *Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim*, who could not go with him into *Egypt*, because they were there before him. And as that place mentions the Children of *Israel* and his Children's Children who came with him into *Egypt*, it is probable for brevity's sake these two things have been join'd together as if they had all been *Jacob's* Children. This expression is in other places of the Scripture, as appears in the numbring of the Children of *Jacob* in the 35th Chapter of *Genesis*, where *Benjamin* is counted amongst the Children that *Jacob* had in *Mesopotamia*, and nevertheless *Benjamin* was not born there but in the land of *Canaan*.

To return to the numbring of the Children that went down with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, it is very difficult to make the supputation agree with the persons that are named. There are other places where these sort of computations are more hard to reconcile, which proceeds rather from the omission of Transcribers, than the confusion of the Order. The Interpreters labour often

to no.

to no purpose to justify these omissions, as if the Scripture has not been subject to as many accidents as most other Books have been (as the Fathers have observed) and that men had not been the depositories of them. We must never contradict experience, especially when it is back't by good authority, and we see that the Fathers and the Jews make no difficulty to acknowledge the Books of the Scripture are not in all points the same as they were in the beginning. The Jews themselves who are called *Caraites*, because they reject all the Tradition of the other Jews, and apply themselves wholly to the Texts of the Scripture, often observe the same things we now speak of notwithstanding the great veneration they have for the Bible. 'Tis true that the Jews ordinarily ascribe these errors to the loss of their Copies at the time of their Captivity in *Babylon*, and say that it is impossible the Collection of Scripture should be perfect for want of true and faithfull Copies: but it is more probable that this proceeds from the negligence of those who lived after *Esdra*s. To conclude, we ought to take heed of giving ridiculous and far-fetch't solutions to these sorts of difficulties we meet with, although it is convenient to try all means possible to explain them, but it cannot be done unless one be thoroughly instructed in what we have already observed, and what we shall farther observe in the sequel of this Criticisme. After this manner *S. Jerome* answers the question which was put concerning *Solomon* and *Achas*, to whom the Scripture seems to allow Children before they were come to the age of maturity. This holy Father, after having given many examples to shew that it was not altogether impossible, adds that, we ought not in reading the Scripture to stick at these sort of questions which relate to the Genealogies, because much time is unprofitably spent, and that there are apparent contradictions not to be reconciled. *Relege* (says he) *omnes & Veteris & Novi Testamenti libros & tantam annorum reperies dissonantiam & numerum inter Judam & Israel id est inter regnum utrumque confusum ut hujusmodi harere questionibus non tam studiosi quam otiosi hominis esse videatur*, and he confirms his opinion by the words of *S. Paul*, *neque intendent fabulis & genealogiis interminatis que questiones prestant magis quam adificationem Dei.*

Hieron. in Ep. ad Vit.

Tim. 1.

It is therefore very uncertain supposing this principle, to establish Genealogies and Chronologies upon the Copies of the

Bible which are come to us, because in many places they are onely Records abridg'd, or else repetitions of the same thing. Which holds not good onely as to the Hebrew Text now extant, but likewise to that which was long time before our Saviour, since it is not onely in the Greek Translation of the Septuagint, but likewise in the original Hebrew. If in some places the Translation happens to be more exact, the order better observ'd, the number better counted, or the repetitions not so great, that the phrases are less maim'd, and the periods more compleat, this is not for all that a convincing argument that it has been translated from better Hebrew Copies, because it may be said these Interpreters took the liberty of changing something to render their Translation more intelligible. Besides this happens so frequently that we may conclude that almost all we have noted was in the Hebrew Text before the Translation of the Septuagint. I would nevertheless not urge so far my reflections on this matter as *Aben Ephra* and *Aaron, Caraites*, Jews, have done, who have rely'd upon nothing but conjectures.

Aben Eph.  
Aaron.

What is plain and evident upon this Subject must be distinguish't from what relies onely on appearance and probability, we ought onely to be perswaded in general that the things which we have spoke of are in many places of the Scripture, because those Books are onely a Collection which is not so perfect as a true original, as the Fathers do agree. That is not to be found in the historical part onely but also in the Laws and Ordinances, which are for that very reason oftentime obscure and intricate. Which creates a dispute between the *Caraites* Jews and the Rabbins, because they agree not whether the thing respects one Law onely, which has been repeated in some several words, or whether it respects two several Laws. The Interpreters often deviate from the sense of *Moses* when they observe onely in his Laws the series of the words, which are not always in their right place, as one may see in the 22d Chapter of *Exodus* and the 3d Verse, where, to make a reasonable construction, what is said of the Thief in the 3d Verse must be join'd with the 1st, because there is a transposition; and then one ought to join the 4th Verse with the 1st; and moreover these words of the 4th Verse [ *If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive* ] ought onely to relate to the Ox and the Sheep which this Verse makes mention of, and not to the Ass, although that is spoke of in the same place with the two other Animals. The

The variety of the style we meet with in the Books of *Moses* seems to be a convincing argument that one and the same man was not the Authour. Sometimes we find a very curt style and sometimes a very copious one, although the variety of the matter does not require it; we ought nevertheless to acknowledge that the Hebrews very often speak but by halves, and that they sometimes begin a matter without ending of it, and that they are not exact in the placing of their words. The Epistles of *S. Paul* furnish us with examples of all these differences of style, nevertheless it would be very difficult to justify the Books of *Moses* and the rest of the Bible where this happens, otherwise than by having recourse to those who have new modell'd the Hebrew Copies, and to Transcribers, who through negligence have omitted whole words and periods. The Authours of the *Mazoret*, which we shall treat of hereafter, seem to agree to this, since they have left certain void spaces, as if they would give notice that in those places the Hebrew Text is defective: moreover the Rabbins are so much perswaded of this truth, that they make insertions in some places where there seems no necessity to require it, which no doubt they would never have done if they thought the Hebrew Text was compleat. 'Tis thus as the Hebrew Rabbins interpret what the Serpent said to *Eve* in the 3d of *Genesis* and the 5th Verse, and that they pretend that in that Text there is onely part related of the discourse between the Serpent and *Eve*, because there are several particulars in the Hebrew which according to them signifie as much more, whence they infer that the discourse is wholly imperfect, and that what went before has been past over in silence.

*R. Moses Cossi*, a learned Jew, to resolve these difficulties has had recourse to a second Law which he calls the oral Law, which is the interpretation of the written Law which God gave to *Moses*, according to their opinion, upon Mount *Sinai*; he believes that the written Law has errors which cannot be rectified but by the Oral, which the Jews pretend has been intirely preserv'd down even unto them: and he gives for example the 40th Verse of the 12th Chapter of *Exodus*, where he says that *the sojourning of the Children of Israel in Egypt was 400 years*. How can one explain that, says this Authour, without the help of the oral Law, since it is certain that *Kobath*, Son of *Levi*, who was one of them that went into *Egypt*, lived but 133 years,

R. Moses  
Cossi in  
pref. on the  
great Books  
of the com-  
mand of the  
Law

years, that *Amram* lived onely 137 years, and that *Moses* was but 80 years old when God spoke to him, which makes in all but 350? The second example which he gives is taken from the 46th Chapter of *Genesis* and the 27th Verse, where 'tis said that *all the souls of the house of Jacob who went into Egypt were threescore and ten*, and nevertheless in counting the number there related they are found to be but 69: moreover 'tis observ'd in the 3d Chapter of *Numbers* the 39th Verse, there are reckon'd 22000, but if we join all the numbers together there remain 300 above the account. This Rabbin brings many other examples to shew that the Text of Scripture alone cannot be understood without the help of oral Law or Tradition, and the Fathers seem to agree with this Rabbin in his opinion.

## CHAP. VI.

*The Objection of the Jews to shew that Moses is the onely Authour of the Law. Answers with new proofs to destroy that Opinion.*

**A**Lthough the most learned Jews agree with us that the Collection of the Bible which we now have is not wholly the same it was in its first original, yet they assure us that the five Books of the Law are wholly *Moses's*. They stily maintain that God dictated them to him word for word, and that they must not say that *Moses* writ one single Verse of his own Authority. They have moreover made it one of the principal Articles of their Faith, and the Doctours of the *Talmud* have excluded those from Heaven who are of another opinion. *R. Moses* assures us according to the judgment of his Doctours that those cannot be rank't in the number of the Israelites that deny that the whole Law comes immediately from God, nay, should except but one Verse or one Word and ascribe it to *Moses* as the Authour. I doubt not but so rigid a Sentence has deterr'd *Abraham* from thoroughly examining, according to the rules of Criticisme, the Books of *Moses* as he has done the rest of the Bible; but if we do but

Talmud.  
treat. on  
Sanhedrim.  
Ramban.  
treat. on  
penitent.

do but apply to the *Pentateuch* what this Authour alledges to prove that the Books which bear the names of *Joshua* and *Samuel* are not theirs, we may be convinc't that the *Pentateuch* is not wholly *Moses's*. This we have already shewn. There remains now that we answer the reasons of the Jews, and at the same time more firmly establish what we have already laid down.

Some amongst them have believed that *Moses* received the whole Law from God upon Mount *Sinai* with the two Tables where the Commandments were, but they are deceived, not having sufficiently examin'd the passages we find related in the *Pentateuch*, nor the time in which they were done. They make use of the Testimonies of *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy* to prove that *Moses* is the onely Authour of the Law, where it is said that *Moses* writ the Law, as if the Book of the Law contain'd the five Books of the *Pentateuch*. This we ought to examin to take away all prejudice which many have, that by the Law in those places the five Books of *Moses* are to be understood.

We shall observe then that the Hebrews call the Law *Torah*, which is as much as to say Instruction or Doctrine, so that all which is writ in the *Pentateuch* may in this sense be call'd Law, and it is circumstances alone that can limit or extend the signification. The words which seem to favour the Jews in this point are in the 24th of *Exodus* and the 12th Verse, where God Exod. 24. commanded *Moses* to come up to the mountain that he might give him the Tables of Stone, the Law and Commandments to instruct the people with. To which they add the Command which God laid upon *Moses* to write all the words of the Law. Moreover 'tis said in the 31th Chapter of the same Book at the 24th Verse, Deut. 31. 5. *That Moses writ in a Book the words of the Law*; but my design is to shew by these passages that in the Books of *Moses* by the word Law we cannot understand the whole *Pentateuch*.

First by what is related in *Exodus* touching the Law and Commandments which God gave *Moses* the whole Law cannot be understood, since the Israelites were 40 years after that in the Wilderness, and that *Moses* did not write or rather did not cause to be writ the things which fell out during those 40 years, but according to the times they past in, as manifestly appears in the Text. So the learnedst among the Jews believe that *Moses* received onely from God upon the Mount the History which relates to the Creation of the World, and the rest which is writ both

both in *Genesis* and *Exodus* to the time that God gave him the Law. We can conclude nothing else from the Words of *Exodus* but that *Moses* received from God upon the Mount, the Tables, the Law, the Ordinances and Commandments. There is no mention made either in this place or any other that God dictated to *Moses* the History of the Creation or the Genealogies or any other things which are related in *Genesis*. These words therefore of *Exodus* ought to be restrain'd to the Commandments and to the Ordinances, there being nothing in them that obliges us to extend them further.

It is not probable that *Moses* read to the people all the *Pentateuch*, since the actions there described were not then come to pass. Thus these words ought to be explained, [*Moses took* Exod. 24. 7. *the Book of the Covenant and read it in the audience of the People.*] Ibid. ver. 4.

This Book of the Covenant is took notice of a little before, where it is said that *Moses* had writ all that God had told him, and this is better explain'd by the preceding words. In the same place *Moses* declared to the people all the words and Ordinances of the Lord, and all the people answered with one voice [*All the words which the Lord hath said will we doe*] it is plain that by these words, the Law, Ordinances and Commandments nothing can be understood but what is treated in this Chapter or Parasha, as *Aben Esra* says; and it is this which is properly called the Book of the Covenant, because God made then a solemn Covenant with the Israelites to whom he gave his Law, his Commandments and his Ordinances by his Servant *Moses*. ver. 3.

In the second place as to what regards the passages of *Deuteronomy* whence the Jews endeavour to prove that *Moses* wrote all the *Pentateuch*, they are to be explain'd after the same manner as I have explain'd those of *Exodus*. The Israelites are commanded in *Deuteronomy* Chapter the 27th Verse 2d and 3d, that as soon as they had passed *Jordan* they should set up great Stones and should write upon them all the words of the Law: but with the least attention to the Text we may be convinc'd that the terme of Law in this place cannot be extended any farther than to the things contained in the 27th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, nor is it generally expressed [*Thou shalt write the words of the Law*] but with restriction [*all the words of this Law*] which is again repeated a little lower in these terms [*Thou shalt* Ibid. ver. 8.

*shalt write upon Stones all the words of this Law.*] Moreover in the beginning of the same Chapter *Moses* and the Elders do injoin the people to observe exactly what was commanded them on that day, and it is this which is termed Law in the following Verses, which consists in the twelve Curses which are related in the same places in form of Law; the manner of pronouncing the last of these maledictions, which is as the conclusion of all, sufficiently evidences that by the word Law in that place ought onely to be understood the twelve Curses, which contain some Ordinances. They ought to be engraven upon Columns that the people might not be dispens't with from observing the Commandments that were fixed upon them. See here the contents of the last malediction, [*curst be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to doe them*] the *Levites* read with a loud voice these twelve Maledictions or Commandments before the people, who answer'd *Amen*, to shew that they submitted themselves to that Law of these twelve Maledictions that they consented should be engraven on Pillars of Stone.

Those Jews who have preferred the literal sense of the Scripture before the dreams of the *Talmud*, and the quirks of the Cabbalistic Doctours agree with us that what is writ in the 27th of *Deuteronomy*, ought not to be understood of the whole Law. In effect can one imagin that *Moses* commanded the Israelites to grave upon twelve Stones all contained in the *Pentateuch*? nevertheless the *Talmudists* who embrace the most improbable and extravagant opinions, have gone further; they have not onely assur'd us that the five Books of *Moses* were engraven on these Stones, but they further affirm that they were writ in 70 Languages. *R. Moses* of *Nahman*, who tells us this story under the name of these Doctours, testifies that he had found in a Book which treats of the crowns of the Law, that all the words of the five Books of the Law were engraven upon these Pillars with all the crowns. By these crowns the Jews understand little strokes or points which they write in fashion of a horn or crown upon certain letters for ornament sake. These crowns are not to be found but in the Hebrew Copies reserv'd for the use of the Synagogue, and not in those which belong to particular persons, and if we will give credit to the fancies of the Rabbins, *Moses* receiv'd these crowns in Mount *Sinai* the same time as he receiv'd the Law, and God taught him during the 40 days he staid there how to

Ramban.  
Com. on  
Deut.

H

make

make them. But setting aside these Rabbins let us reassume our matter.

There is another passage in *Deuteronomy* which is brought to prove that *Moses* writ the whole Law; it is the 31st Chapter of this Book [And it came to pass when *Moses* had made an end of writing the words of this Law in a Book untill they were finished, that he commanded the Levites which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this Book of the Law and put it in the side of the Ark.]

But the furthest we can extend this word Law in this place, is, to what is contained in *Deuteronomy*, which is a repetition of other Books of the Law; and this is the sense that most of the Jews have given of these words. It is certain also, that *Moses* writ not all *Deuteronomy*, because there are acts and expressions that possibly cannot be ascribed to him. Wherefore this word Law ought to be limited according to the circumstances and places where it is found.

I shall not dwell long on these words of *Joshua*. *Joshua* wrote there upon the stones a Copy of the Law of *Moses*: for this second Copy of the Law of *Moses* is properly the execution of what had been commanded him in the 27th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*; and the word Law signifies in this place of *Joshua* no more than the Commandments which were contained in those twelve Maledictions which we before mentioned. I know that the Jews disagree among themselves in the explanation of this passage of *Joshua*, but although they differ about the true sense, the major part of them are of opinion that this passage cannot be extended to all *Deuteronomy*; what creates the greatest difficulty is the Hebrew word *Misne*, which signifies *Repetition*, whence some have concluded that all *Deuteronomy* ought to be meant, because it is called the repetition of the Law: but without being so nice the word *Misne* signifies simply in this place *Copy* or *Example*. To which the word repetition agrees very well, because the Copy is as one may say a duplicate. There are Jews who, regarding the present custom of their Synagogues, where they read every year upon the *Pentecost* an abridgment of their whole Law, have thought that the Law that was engraven upon Stones was nothing else but this abridgment.

Other Jews have pretended that the Law which was writ upon Pillars contained onely the Decalogue or Ten Commandments, but

but there is nothing in *Deuteronomy* or *Joshua* to support this opinion, whereas 'tis manifest there is no other Law spoke of but what is contained in the twelve Maledictions, to which the twelve Benedictions in the 28th of *Deuteronomy* ought to be added. *R. Levi Ben Gerson* has followed this last explanation as most natural, and we cannot doubt, if we diligently observe the 27th and 28th of *Deuteronomy*, adding the latter end of the 8th Chapter of *Joshua*, where it is said that *Joshua* read all the words of the Law the benedictions and the maledictions after the same manner as it was in the Law, but these words [the blessings and cursings] have been added onely to explain those others which immediately go before the words of the Law, and that conformably to the ordinary style of the Scripture, where the last words are very often put for the interpretation of the former.

Before we finish this Chapter we shall observe that *Aben Esra*, one of the ablest Interpreters of the Scriptures among the Jews, has made no question but that there have been many additions in the Books of *Moses*; but he durst not publickly declare it, but by equivocal words he has sufficiently shewn his opinion in this point. *When these sort of difficulties occur*, says he, *it is a mystery which those who understand, do not divulge*. He is nevertheless a little more plain upon the words of *Deuteronomy* [see what *Moses* said to the Israelites beyond *Jordan*] where he tells us his mind freely enough. 'Tis certain that *Moses* did not pass over *Jordan*, and by consequence this must be writ by the Israelites who were on the other side, and called the place where *Moses* spake these words the other side of *Jordan*, although when *Moses* spoke them the Israelites were on this side. *Aben Esra*, who would rather explain this passage according to the natural and proper sense than to fly to subtil and forc't interpretations, has made this observation: [You will understand the true sense if you conceive the secret of the twelve. *Moses* writ the Law. The Canaanites were then in the Land. In the mountain of the Lord it shall be seen. See here his Bed which is a Bed of Iron.] These are so many passages taken out of the *Pentateuch*, which *Aben Esra* brings to shew that the first words of *Deuteronomy* are no more *Moses* his than all the other examples which he has alledged.

*Aben Esra*  
Sup. 12. cap.  
Gen.



By these words *the secret of the twelve*, *Aben Esra* would understand the twelve Verses which *Moses* is not the Authour of. *R. Samuel Tsertsa*, who has composed a Book of illustrations upon the Commentaries of this Rabbi, has endeavour'd to justify him from the scandal he might incur from those of his own Nation, for having thought *Moses* had not wholly writ the five Books of the Law, but he defends him so weakly, that that is sufficient to convince the Jews of their head-strong humour and illusion in this point, where they blindly follow the decisions of the *Talmud*. The twelve Verses which *Aben Esra* has pointed out are the twelve last Verses of *Deuteronomy*, and *Rabbi Tsertsa*, who is likewise of the same opinion, confirms it by the authority of the *Talmud*: he says that in the *Talmud* there are some Doctours who have thought that *Joshua* was the Authour of eight of the last Verses of *Deuteronomy*, and that *Aben Esra* has gone a little too far in denying all the twelve to be really *Moses*'s.

As to the other examples which *Aben Esra* has brought, he acknowledges that *Moses* could no more be the Authour of this Expression, *And Moses writ the Law* than this other, *The Canaanite was then in the Land*. Moreover it is not likely that *Moses* was the Authour of this proverbial way of speaking, *In the mount of Lord it shall be seen*, since he who has added this to the Text tells us that it was an usual Proverb in his time. Besides that this Mount seems to be one of the Mounts of the Country of *Morea*, and the name of *Morea* was not given it till a long time after.

To conclude, *Aben Esra* brings for the last example of additions that are inserted into the Books of *Moses*, what is writ in *Deuteronomy* concerning the Bed of *Og* the King of *Basan*, in which it is very probable he is in the right; for if we diligently read what is writ concerning the Bed of *Basan*, we shall find that those who have collected these Books have added some words to illustrate the words of the Text, by conforming them to the practice and customs of their own times. Some even of our Interpreters are of the same opinion, and they prove it by other examples, but it will be unnecessary to produce any more. Let us now see after what manner the Books of *Moses* have been compiled.

## CHAP. VII.

*After what manner the Books of Moses have been writ.  
Books attributed to Patriarchs who liv'd before Moses.  
History of the Sabbaites or ancient Caldeans.*

THE Jews assure us, as we have already observ'd, that God dictated to *Moses* word for word the five Books of the Law, but because it cannot be imagin'd that *Moses* receiv'd from God upon the Mount, the History of what fell out for forty years after in the Desert, the most judicious amongst them believe that God told *Moses* the things in the time as they happened. 'Tis true that God oftentimes commands *Moses* to write certain things which the Law makes mention of, but that ordinarily relates to the Commandments onely, or Ordinances, or things of that nature. As to what pass every day in his own presence it was not necessary that God should dictate it to him: he had under him persons who put in writing all the considerable actions, and had the care of preserving them to posterity. We need but cast our eyes upon the method that the *Pentateuch* is composed in to be perswaded of this truth, and to see that some other than *Moses* has corrected the historical parts. The Laws which God ordain'd him to write are distinguisht from the body of the History.

There were in that time then Registeries where was writ not onely what of importance pass in the State, but even what God commanded *Moses* as appears in the 17th Chapter of *Exodus*; Exod. 17. where God says, *Write this for a memorial in a Book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua*. By these words God commands *Moses* to make the affair of the Amalakites be writ in the publick Registry, where were writ the acts of what pass. Most of the Interpreters of the Scripture concern themselves very much to explain which is the Book this place relates to, but the natural sense is that *Moses* commanded the publick Writers to inregister that days work against the Amalakites which this place speaks of: we ought likewise in the same manner to explain the 19th Verse of the 31st Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, where it is said  
[write

[write now this Song and teach it the Children of Israel] God would that this Song should be writ with other publick Acts, and that every one should have a Copy of it as well as of the Law.

We may likewise apply to the Books of *Genesis* what we have already said touching the manner of the inregistring the publick Acts in the time of *Moses*. These Books contain the Creation of the World, and many things which happened many ages before him: and in all *Genesis* there is no observation of God's dictating to *Moses* what is there related, 'tis not likewise said that he writ it by the spirit of Prophecy: but all these Histories and Genealogies are simply related, as if *Moses* had taken them from some authentick Books, or else had had a constant Tradition. There is a Sect called *Sabbaites* which ordinarily we derive from the ancient Chaldeans, who produce Books which bear the name of *Adam*, and if we give credit to the Cabbalistical Doctours, every Patriarch from *Adam* to *Moses* had an Angel for Master who instructed him, and most of these Patriarchs have left Records of what past in their time; if this were true *Moses* would without doubt have taken out of these Books the History of the Creation of the World, and the rest of the ancient History.

The Religion of *Mahomet* has borrowed very much from the Works of these Cabbalisticals, and their followers do mention Books which God gave to the first Patriarchs; but there is nothing of truth in all this; all these pretended Books have been invented by Imposters, who would authorize their own dreams under the specious names of *Adam*, *Seth*, *Sem*, *Abraham* and other Patriarchs. *Moses* without doubt has had other Records; were they writ or were they preserved *viva voce* down to him in the Families which God had chosen to be faithfull to him in the worship of true Religion.

We shall not here confute the stories we find in the Jewish Books, concerning the ancient Books attributed to the first Patriarchs, forasmuch as it is very probable that the Chaldeans were the Authours of all these Inventions. The particular names of Angels who have been their guides and conductours are related, and mysteries are set down which had been revealed to these first Fathers by the ministry of these wise Masters. *R. Abraham Bendior*, in his Preface which he has put before his

Commen-

Commentary to the Book of *Jetsira* or the Creation, relates the names of the Angels who have been the Masters of the first Patriarchs, the Angel *Raziel* was *Adam's* Master, *Jophiel* *Sem's*, *Zedekiel* *Abraham's*, *Raphael* *Isaac's*, *Peliel* *Jacob's*, *Gabriel* *Joseph's*, and in short *Metatron* was *Moses's* Master, and *Adathiel* *Elias's* his. This same Authour at last adds that each of these Angels had given to his Scholar, either by writing or word of mouth, the Cabbal which is the Tradition, and by this means it has been preserved among the People of God.

For example *Raziel* who was the Angel or Master of *Adam*, brought him a Book from God which contained the secrets of an high and most excellent Wisdom, which is treated of in the Book call'd *Zohar*. The Jews acknowledge in the *Talmud* that the names of Angels and Months were not in use in their Nation till after their return from *Babylon*, and it may be for this reason that the *Sadducees* would not give credit to what is reported in the Scripture concerning Angels, as if the Jewish Doctours, who had made the Collection, had added them, and so they ought to be look't upon as Allegories.

'Tis probable that *Pythagoras* and *Plato* have been searching into the same Originals, because their Books are very like those of the Cabbalistical Jews, which are full of these sorts of allegorical Fictions, and little quirks concerning numbers and the letters of the Alphabet. These Cabbalistical Doctours have ascribed to *Abraham* a Book intituled *A Book of the Creation*, and they pretend that *Abraham* writ it by reason the Doctours or Sages of *Chaldea* agreed not among themselves about the first principles of Religion: some set up two first contrary Causes, and others made three. There were some who acknowledged the Sun to be the first principle of all things which, according to them, gave the Patriarch *Abraham* occasion to compose this Book of the Creation, upon which *R. Saadias Gaon*, and after him *R. Mo-*

ses *Botrel* have made Commentaries: but the little niceties of the Cabbal which are related in this Book makes it evident that 'twas composed by some Imposter who has borrow'd *Abraham's* name. There are some Jews who deny that *Abraham* is the true Authour of it. However it is, one may nevertheless see in these supposed Works something of the ancient Tradition, wherefore although good part of what is related in the Arabian Authours concerning the Religion of the *Sabbaites* is not very ancient, and

there

Zohar upon  
Genesis.  
Talmud.

Jetsira or  
Creation.

R. Saadias.  
R. Moses  
Botrel.

Sabien or  
Sabba  
Book of  
Adam.

R. Abraham  
Bendior.

there are abundance of Fables, nevertheless one may discover some remains of the Faith of the ancient Chaldeans, who applied themselves much to the study of Astrology: now as *Abraham* was a Chaldean it is not strange that the *Sabbaites* should preserve the History of *Abraham* and other Patriarchs, but forasmuch as they had no Histories but by Tradition, every one has modelled them according to his own way and inclination, and the Chaldeans or *Sabbaites* have made them speak according to the principles of their own Religion.

The *Mahometans* speak of these *Sabbaites*; and their Religion is full of many fables concerning Angels, which may have been borrowed from them and the *Jews* who have writ upon the *Cabbal*. The Arabian Writers have pleased themselves in describing the Religion of these ancient *Sabbaites*, of whom *R. Moses* has treated upon the report of these Arabian Doctours; and as he was very knowing in his own Religion he applies these Histories of the *Sabbaites* to those of *Moses*, by comparing them together, to shew that *Moses* did truly relate them, but that they have been corrupted by the *Sabbaites*. He says that *Abraham* had been bred up in their Faith, which he afterwards fell off from; making it appear there was another Divinity besides the Sun and Stars; which agrees well enough with the manner which *Abraham* and other Patriarchs are spoke of in the Books of *Moses*, who make God the Authour of all which happens upon the earth, attributing it to his providence, as if men were but the instruments of this first cause; and *Abraham* further to confute the opinion of the *Sabbaites* compares the Sun to an Ax in the hand of a Workman.

The same *Sabbaites* speak likewise of *Adam*, whom they nevertheless make the first Man as *Moses* has done, but they say onely that *Adam* was a Prophet sent from the Moon to establish her Worship, and that he composed the Books of Agriculture. They add that *Seth* the Son of *Adam* fell from the belief of his Father, and laid aside the worship of the Moon. They have likewise Histories of *Noah*, of whom they speak of as a man given much to Tillage, and who would not likewise receive the Worship of *Helamira* or Images, acknowledging but one Creatour of all things, whom he serv'd. I do not know whether a man may not ascribe to this the strict prohibition that God laid upon the Israelites by the ministry of *Moses* of having any  
Figure

Figure or Image. This may likewise be the reason why the unity of God is so often inculcated in the Scripture, and that it is said, *Hear Israel and know that thy God is one*: there is nothing so strictly forbid them as the idolatry and worship of Stars, but for fear of attributing too much to conjectures, if I should continue to explain the Law of *Moses* by the report of the Doctrine of the ancient *Chaldeans* or *Sabbaites*, I pass by many other Histories of the first times which have been alledg'd; nevertheless it is to be observed that all those Histories are full of allegorical Fictions, and that it is almost impossible to distinguish truth from fables.

Some Authours have nevertheless believed that the *Sabbaites* or ancient *Chaldeans* have not altogether laid aside this first Divinity on which all things depend: but as there is an infinite distance betwixt it and men, they have establish'd other less Divinities to come more easily to this first Being, which could not according to their opinion be immediately communicated to men. It is likewise probable that the first Grecian Philosophers, who have followed this opinion, have borrow'd it from the Chaldeans, and that the worship of Angels and Stars took from thence its original: it is likewise probable for this very reason the *Jews* absolutely condemn the worship of Angels as their Intercessours, all their prayers are immediately addressed to God, and they acknowledge no other Mediatours. *Moses* affirms he had seen God face to face and had familiarly convers'd with the Divine Majesty; moreover the Sacrifices which he commands in the Law are all offered to God alone, and 'tis probable that he would not have commanded so many but to turn the Israelites from the Sacrifices which the Nations among whom they lived offer'd to others to obtain their influences. In one word, if we reflect upon the ancient Religion of the *Sabbaites* who were Authours of all that is superstitious in Astrology, and in the foolish Science of the Talismans and Teraphins or Idols, one may explain a good part of what is contained in the Books of *Moses*: but at present we shall proceed no further on this matter.

Finally, for what relates to the Books of *Moses* as they are at present in the collection that we have, the additions which have been made to the ancient Acts hinder us from discerning what is truly his, from what has been added by those that succeeded him, or by the Authours of the last Collection. Moreover this  
I Collection

Collection being sometimes onely an Abridgment of ancient Records, we cannot be assured that the Genealogies are contained according to their full extent. I know not whence some of the Orientals and even the *Jews* have took a great many of other Histories which they apply to those first times, as if the History of *Moses* were but an Abridgment: nevertheless the many Fables we meet with in their Books make me doubt of the truth of the rest, its very probable that these Histories have been invented under the pretence of some groundless Traditions. We ought not nevertheless to imagine that all these ancient Traditions are utterly false, because we find some confirm'd in the New Testament. S. *Jude* quotes in his Epistle the Book of *Enoch*, which was among the Apocryphas of his time, and which had apparently been composed by some *Jew* after their return from their Captivity; S. *Paul* likewise in one of his Epistles makes mention of *Jannes* and *Jambres* who opposed *Moses*, and these two names are likewise in the ancient allegorical Commentary on the *Pentateuch*, which the *Jews* call *Zohar*.

Enoch.

Paul 2 Tim.  
c. 3. v. 8.  
Jannes,  
Jambres.

The Sect of the *Pharisees*, which has prevailed over all the rest, was very curious in these sorts of Traditions, part of which we yet find in the *Talmud*, and in the Books of the allegorical Doctours, but there are so many Fables added that we cannot discern the truth. The *Jews* are at this day so ignorant of what relates to their Religion, that they doubt even of the most clear Histories which are reported in the Books of *Moses*, and many of them, thinking that their ancient Patriarchs could not live so many years as is set down in *Genesis*, have had recourse to I know not what subtilties. They pretend that this History was but an Abridgment, where the chief of the Family was onely nam'd, and they made him live, preserving his memory whilest such a manner of living lasted which he establish'd in his own Family; and thus under his name were comprehended his Successors, untill some change happened in that Policy or manner of Living which he was the Authour of, but it is easie to disprove this by the Texts of Scripture. 'Tis true the *Jews* observ'd this method in their ancient Histories, and not being able to find wherewith to fill up many years, have made their Doctours live four or five Ages, and have afterwards had recourse to Miracles. It is not the same with the History of *Moses*.

*Moses*, where the time of the birth of these Patriarchs, when they had Children, and a great many other circumstances belonging to one and the same person are exactly related.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Other Books of the Bible the Collection of which the Jews ascribe to the great Assembly held under Esdras. Examination of this Assembly and of every Book of the Bible in particular.*

AS the Law is the principal Book of the *Jews*, so likewise have they preserv'd it in Scrolls or Volumes much more exactly than the rest of the Bible. They are oblig'd to read it in their Assemblies, and besides that they often read it in private. As to the other Books although they esteem them holy and inspir'd by God, yet they have not an equal veneration for them, if one diligently examines them one shall not find them so exact as the *Pentateuch*. To which may be added that many *Jews* learning by heart almost all the *Pentateuch*, it has been more hard for Transcribers to alter it. The *Jews* ascribe the present Collection we have of the Scriptures to *Esdras* and Doctours of a certain Assembly which was held, according to them, at that time for the regulating of the affairs of Church and State. There is nothing more famous in the Books of the Rabbins than this Assembly, which they call by way of excellency *the great Synagogue* to distinguish it from all others. But the little appearance of truth which I find in most things which they ascribe to this Assembly, makes me reasonably doubt of what they tell us concerning the Collection of the holy Scriptures. The *Jews* themselves do not altogether agree about the time it was held in. The Authour of the Book intituled *Coxri* makes it later than the others, for which he seems to have reason, because it is very probable that the *Jews* did not make their Ordinances chiefly as to what regards the Canon of the Bible till some time after their return to *Jerusalem*.

Great Syna.

There are likewise in this Collection Books which were after *Esdra's* his time, unless we say that this Collection was made all at a time, and this seems to be most likely. We ought not therefore to rely upon the Traditions the *Jews* have upon this Subject, because there is nothing amongst them constant or well grounded concerning this matter.

For the better understanding the nature of the Collection of the Scriptures which the *Jews* call Canonical, 'tis necessary to reflect upon what we have already said concerning the publick Writers, who kept in the Registeries of the Republick the acts of what past of most importance in the State, and publish't them by adding or diminishing according as they thought fit. Which the Authours of the latter Collection have likewise done, and it is not to be doubted but that there were in the time of *Joshua* these sorts of publick Writers, who have put into writing his actions, but those who have afterwards made the Collections have left out part, so that we have onely an Abridgment. The Authour of the Book intituled *Cozri* tells us that he who compiled the sacred Scripture has onely related what was most known to the people, having made no mention of the wisdom and other qualities of *Joshua*, but he relates onely some miracles and other actions which the people were instructed in: he says the same thing of the Books we have under the names of *Judges*, *Samuel* and the *Kings*, because according to him the intention of those who made this Collection was onely to publish what was most dazling and pleasing to the people; the rest of their Histories have been buried in oblivion, because the *Jews* have not preserved the ancient Acts of which we have at this day but an Abridgment.

We find in the Book of *Joshua* the same additions and changes as in the Books of *Moses*. *Theodoret* affirms that this Volume was collected long time after *Joshua*, and that it was but an Abstract of an ancient Commentary named the *Book of just Men*, which is spoken of in the 10th Chapter of the said Book of *Joshua*. *Massius*, who has writ a learned Commentary upon this History, explaining the 10th Chapter, shews at full that what is related in the Book of *Joshua* could not be his, and he confirms at the same time by very good reasons what we have said touching the manner of making the Collection of the holy Scriptures. *Don Isaac Abravanel* wholly rejects the opinion of his ancient

Cozri pari 3.  
nu. 63.

Theod.  
qua. 14.

Mass. in Jos.

cient Doctours, who have in the *Talmud* attributed to *Joshua* the Book that bears his name, and he proves the contrary by many actions and ways of speech which could not proceed from him. As when it is said in the 4th Chapter and 9th Verse that *The twelve stones that Joshua set up in the midst of Jordan remain to this day.* And in the 5th Chapter and 9th Verse, *This place is called Gilgal to this day,* from whence it is easie to conclude that one part of this Book was writ some time after these things happened. Moreover the History of the division of the Sons of *Dan*, who took the City of *Lesecem*, happened not likewise till after the death of *Joshua*: *Massius* believes that it has been inserted into the Collection of *Joshua*, that the place where the Danites were fixed might be known. So likewise we find that the same story is related more at large in the Book of *Judges*, which is its proper place.

As to the History of *Judges*, as it bears no name of any particular Authour, some with the Doctours of the *Talmud* have ascrib'd it to *Samuel*, and others to *Esdra's*. It may be that *Samuel* may have composed it, and that *Esdra's*, or he who made the last Collection of the holy Scriptures, has added many things. However it is, it is certain that this History, or at least some part of it, was not composed till long after the deeds there spoke of happened. There were not yet Kings who govern'd the Hebrews, and yet there is mention of them, as where it is said [*At that time there was no King in Israel.*] Which plainly supposes that the Israelites were then under the government of Kings. One may farther observe that the Genealogies of this History are sometimes onely set down in short, whether that proceeds from the negligence of Transcribers, or the design of the Authour of the Collection, or rather from both together. Wherefore one cannot ground upon this Book the principles of a certain Chronology, by reason there are Genealogies omitted.

The Books which we have under the name of *Samuel* cannot likewise be wholly his, by reason of certain ways of speaking which were not in his time, besides they contain Histories which happened not till after his death. When he speaks of the Ark which was taken by the Philistins, he says, *That the high Priests of Dagon, and those who enter into his Temple, tread not upon the threshold of the Temple to this day.* And in another place he adds, that *The Ark is to this day in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite.*

Josh. 4.

Josh. 19.  
v. 47.

Judg. 17.  
v. 6. 18.  
v. 31.

Sam. 1. c. 9.

1b. c. 6.  
v. 18.



*shemite.* Samuel could not report after this manner deeds which he was witness of. He could not have said in speaking of himself, that *He who heretofore was called Seer is now called Prophet,* and it is moreover related in the same Book that *it was twenty years since the Ark was taken in Kiriath-jearim.* How, says *Abra-vanel,* could that be, since the Ark remained but thirteen years in that place in the life of *Samuel,* and that seven years after his death *David* brought it from thence? It is certain that in *Samuel's* time there were yet no Kings of *Judah,* and nevertheless we read in this Book that *Ziklag belongs to the Kings of Judah to this day.* There are also several other such like examples in the second Book, from whence *Abra-vanel* upon the same reasons concludes that this History cannot be ascribed to *Gad* and *Nathan* because they lived at the same time as *Samuel.* *Bonfrerius* the *Jesuit* acknowledges that *Samuel* could not write all the History that goes under his name, and he ascribes to him onely the first 24 Chapters of the 1st Book, which nevertheless cannot be wholly true.

As to the other Chapters of this same Book and the History of the *Kings,* he judiciously observes that one cannot assert that one and the same person is the Authour, but that several Prophets or Priests have had a hand in it, every one writing what happened in his time, although what they had writ was not so soon publish'd. *Sixtus* of *Sienna* and several others have ascribed these Books part to *Samuel* and part to the Prophets *Nathan* and *Gad,* because it is said in the *Chronicles* the actions of *David* have been writ in the Books of *Samuel, Nathan* and *Gad.* But although that agrees with the principles we have already set down concerning the Prophets who collected every one the acts of their times, there are nevertheless in these Books several ways of speaking, which clearly demonstrate that the last Collection was not made till long time after most of these Prophets, and by Authours which could not possibly be contemporary with them.

It would be unnecessary to relate the opinion of several other Authours upon a subject upon which we can affirm nothing certain: and it is not certainly known even whether *Esdra*s was the undoubted Authour of the last Collection of the canonical Scriptures, as is commonly believed: it is probable that the *Jews* at their return from Captivity made a Collection out of the

of the Records which they had, part of which they gave to the people, and the other part they kept in their Registeries. They called this first part which they made publick canonical Scriptures. As there are many Records join'd together, and that they are not of a chain, we ought not so much to regard the order and time, as the things, for there are some things which are related in the same place although they happened in different times: for this reason likewise it is that several Histories have been inserted into the Prophecies which were not writ by the Prophets whose names they bear. We find for example in the Prophecy of *Jeremiah,* the History of the destruction of *Jerusalem,* which is writ in the 4th Book of *Kings.* *R. D. Kimbi* remarks *R. D. Kimbi,* in his Commentary on this Prophecy that he who collected it has added the History of the Captivity, after the manner it is in the end of the Book of *Kings.* Moreover these words inserted into the Prophecy of *Jeremiah,* *Hitherto are the words of* *Jeremiah,* plainly shew that he is not the sole Authour of the Book publish'd under his name. *King. c. 25. Jer. 51. 64.*

As the power of the publick Writers we before spoke of has always been the same during the Jewish Republick, we ought not to wonder that in the Collection of the canonical Scriptures, there are some which have been writ after *Esdra*s, therefore *Esdra*s is not the last composer of the sacred Scriptures. It signifies very little whether these last Writers have had the name of Prophets, so they have had the same Authority, and it is certain that the *Jews* after *Esdra*s have preserved the acts of what passed of importance in the State, as may be seen in the end of the first Book of *Maccabees.* *Josephus* nevertheless, *Macc. c. 16. v. 24.* writing against *Appian,* testifies that the Books of the *Jews* which have been writ after the reign of *Artaxerxes* have not the same Authority as the others that were writ before that time, because there was not then among them a certain succession of Prophets; but it suffices as we have said to authorise these Books that their Republick it self remain'd, forasmuch as God, who was always the Head, has never fail'd of giving them persons from time to time who had all the qualities necessary for writing holy Scriptures: 'tis true since their return from *Babylon* they took rather the name of Scribes or Writers than of Prophets, but the changing of the name works no alteration as to the thing. We ought not likewise to regard what is related by the

the *Talmudists* concerning the Books of *Ezekiel*, *Ecclesiastes* and the *Proverbs*, these ancient Doctours assure us that it was debated in an Assembly whether these Books should be received as Canonical, and that many were of opinion they should be wholly rejected. But as most of the Histories which are related in the *Talmud* have been made at random, we ought not to give credit to them: the difficulty there is of explaining some places of those Works, and of reconciling what *Ezekiel* says touching the Temple with what is elsewhere writ, has given occasion to these ancient Doctours of forging this History.

The Books which have been gathered since the last Collection have been called Apocrypha, because they have not perhaps been authoris'd by the *Sanhedrim*. S. *Jerome* himself dares not call them Canonical when he follows the opinion of the *Jews*; but the Church which has succeeded the Synagogue, having acknowledg'd them for divine and authentick, their authority is no more to be questioned. And in effect, the same S. *Jerome*, speaking of the Book of *Judith*, which is not in the Jewish Canon, places it in the number of sacred Books, and gives no other reason but that the Council of *Nice* declared it Canonical. It is likely that the *Jews* placed in their Canon onely the Books writ in Hebrew, and which were preserved in their Registeries, excepting some Chapters of *Daniel* and *Esdra*s which we have in Chaldee, and which apparently were taken out of the Registeries of the Chaldeans, where these acts were kept. I believe moreover that the *Jews* having lost the use of the Hebrew Tongue, writ no more their acts in this Language but in the Chaldean which was their mother Tongue. Without doubt part of the Books which we call Apocryphal, and for all that are nevertheless true, though they have not been authoris'd by the Jewish *Sanhedrim*, have been took out of these Records writ in the Chaldean Language. S. *Jerome* testifies that *Toby* and *Judith* were writ in Chaldee, and *Ramban*, in his Preface on the *Pentateuch*, quotes a Book writ in this same Chaldean Language, which he calls the great Wisdom, and what he relates agrees with the Greek at this day of the Book of *Wisdom*. It is nevertheless more probable that this Book was composed first in Greek by some *Hellenist Jew*, and that afterwards it was translated into Chaldee by some other *Jew*. *Josephus*,

Talmud.  
Treat. on  
Sabb.

*Josephus* in his Apology against *Appian* makes use of a certain passage in the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*: the Rabbins themselves several times cite these apocryphal Books, so that the *Jews* have not altogether rejected them, but have onely considered them as Works Apocryphal, that is to say, hidden and unknown, because they had not been publish't by the authority of the *Sanhedrim*, may be then these Books which are called Apocryphal have been taken out of the acts which were preserved in the Registeries of the *Jews*. *Sixtus* of *Sienna*, who has acknowledg'd this authority of the great *Sanhedrim* of the *Jews*, assures us that the History of the *Maccabees* made by *Jason* has been abridg'd by the authority of the *Sanhedrim* of *Jerusalem*; and the ancient Fathers have likewise not been ignorant of the authority of the great *Sanhedrim*, even in that time when *Josephus* would have it that there was no certain succession of Prophets among the Hebrews. *Origen*, who had been more conversant among the *Jews*, being willing to give reasons for the differences which are betwixt the Hebrew Text and the Septuagint Translation, has recourse to the Apocryphal Books of the *Jews*, which had not been made publick; which he generally doth when he would give reasons for the additions which were in the Greek Translation. He says, according to the opinion of the *Cozri*, that the *Jews* in the collection they have made of their Books have omitted many things which were necessary to instruct the people with, and that nevertheless the things have remained in the apocryphal Books, from whence the Greek Interpreters have taken them. S. *Hilary* goes farther than *Origen*, for to give the greater authority to the Septuagint Translation he compares them to the Seventy of the *Sanhedrim*, which *Moses* had establish't to judge of the most important affairs of the State, and who had been inspired by God, although this Father is deceived in the fact, forasmuch as the Seventy Interpreters, supposing them to be such as they are represented by *Aristeus*, were not of the body of the great *Sanhedrim*, he acknowledges nevertheless the particular privilege of these ancient Senatours, who he believes had been inspired by God, although he gives them neither the name nor quality of Prophets.

In fine, besides the Writers we have already observ'd there was another sort among the Hebrews, who writ in a short and sententious style, and were by some call'd Poets; The *Psalms*,

the *Proverbs*, the *Ecclesiastes*, and the Book of *Job*, are writ after this manner, many have thought that some of these Works were really compos'd in Verse. *Josephus* and *S. Jerome* have observ'd the measures but they have not diligently examin'd this matter, when they measure these pretended Hebrew Verses with the Latin and Greek. It is more probable that they are onely Sentences writ in a short style, without the measures of long or short, which some have ascrib'd to them. Those who writ in this short and sententious style are ordinarily call'd *Moschelim*, that is to say, cunning Men, and who speak sententiously. The *Alcoran* of *Mahomet*, which is in great esteem among the *Mahometans*, is writ in Arabick in this style; 'tis true the *Jews* now make use of Poësie, but it is but of late, and they are beholding to the Arabians of whom they have borrowed it.

I shall say nothing here of the parabolical style which has been in much esteem among the people of the *Lavants*, as *S. Jerome* observes. Some have thought that even the Books of *Job*, *Toby* and *Judith* were not so much Histories as Works compos'd in this parabolical style and holy fictions which were profitable. In effect this manner of parabolical writing is ordinary enough with the Authours of the New Testament, who give such good circumstances sometimes to these Parables that one would easily imagin them to be true Histories, if we were not advertis'd that they were Parables.

The Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* is an evident Example. The names of the persons that are express'd in these parabolical Discourses do not sufficiently prove that they ought to be taken for true Histories, for these names are ordinarily accommodated to the Subject, and there are fictions in names as well as things. This manner of instructing the people always pleas'd the *Pharisees*, which to this day is a ruling Sect among the *Jews*, so likewise their *Talmud* and most part of their ancient Books are fill'd with these sort of allegorical Fictions, which ought not to be explain'd according to the letter, as if they related true Histories. But whether it be a Book, or a History, or a simple Parable, or a History intermixt with Parables it is not for all that less true or divine. But according to the common and most approved opinion the Books of *Job*, *Toby* and *Judith* are not meerly Parables.

C H A P.

## C H A P. IX.

*The general division of the Books of the Bible. Jewish and Christian Authours on this Subject reconciled. In what sense the Jews deny Daniel to be a Prophet. They differ not in this from the opinion of the Christians.*

THE holy Books, which comprise at present the Collection of all the Scripture, were call'd by the *Jews*, at their return from the Captivity at *Babylon*, *Mikra*, *Reading*, nevertheless at first they gave this name to none but the Books of the Law, as it appears from the words of *Nehemiah*, where the Nehem. 8. Text of the Law is call'd *Mikra*. The Doctours began about that time to distinguish by this word their Glosses or Interpretations from the Text of *Moses*, and as the people understood not then the Hebrew Language it was necessary to expound the Law in Chaldee, which was their mother Tongue. In the course of time the rest of the Bible was likewise call'd *Mikra*, and in the *Talmud* this word is sometimes made use of when the Text of Scripture is compar'd with the Glosses of the Doctours, upon which the Tradition of the Jewish Religion is founded. It is likewise from hence that the Sect of the *Caraites* among the *Jews* has took its name, because they apply themselves chiefly to the Text of Scripture, not acknowledging the Tradition of other *Jews* for the principles of their Religion.

The *Jews* nevertheless at this day ordinarily make use of the word *four and twenty* instead of the holy Scripture, because they have divided the Bible into 24 parts. *S. Jerome* mentions this division when he says that, according to the opinion of the S. Jerom in pref. in Eldra. *Jews*, what is not according to the 24 Elders ought to be rejected as Apocryphal, by this allusion which he makes to the 24 Elders in the *Revelation* he means all the Books in the Scripture contain'd in the Jewish Canon. But we ought to take care not to confound with these 24 Elders of *S. Jerome*, the like expression which is in other Fathers, who have divided the Bible into 24 Books alluding thereby to the 24 Letters in the Greek Alphabet. These last comprehend ordinarily under the name

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of the

of the 24, the Books which are not in the Jewish Canon, whereas S. *Jerome*, following herein the opinion of the *Jews*, excludes them. He likewise observes that the *Jews*, to compleat this number of 24, have divided the Book of *Ruth* from the History of *Judges*, and the *Lamentations* from the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*. The Greek Fathers have imitated the *Jews* herein, when they divide the whole Bible into 22 Books, in relation to the 22 Letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, as we read in *Josephus* his Works.

We find in the Writings of the *Jews* many other names of the Scripture which we shall now pass over, that we may treat more fully on another famous division which they make of the whole Bible into three Classes. The first Class comprehends the five Books of the Law onely, which they distinguish from all other parts of the Scripture, because the quality of Prophet was according to them more eminent in *Moses* than in the Prophets which have succeeded him. The second Class is composed of Books they call *Nebaim* or *Prophets*. And the third of those they call *Cetuvim* or *Hagiographys*. 'Tis probable our Saviour alluded to this division of the Books of the Bible when he said, that it was necessary that all that is spoke of him in the Law of *Moses*, in the *Prophets* and in the *Psalms* should be accomplish'd, for the *Psalms* are in the number of *Hagiographys*. *Josephus* seems likewise to countenance it, when he places among the *Hagiographys* the *Hymns* or *Psalms*, and the Books which treat of morality.

Luke 24. 42.  
Joc. lib. 1.  
con. App.

Although this last division of the sacred Scriptures into three Classes seems to be ancient, it may be nevertheless that the ancient *Jews* agreed not altogether herein with the Rabbins who have added their dreams to the opinions of those ancients. There are many learned men who find fault that the *Jews* exclude *Daniel* from the number of the Prophets, and *Theodoret* has reprov'd them very severely. But it is easie to reconcile their opinion in this point with that of the Christians, since they agree that the Books of the Bible which are called Canonical have been equally inspired by God, and moreover that the Book of *Daniel* is of the number of these canonical Books. S. *Jerome*, who has observ'd that the *Jews* reckon not *Daniel* among the Prophets, at the same time observes, that they place his Book among the *Hagiographys*, and by consequence they acknowledge him

Theod. in  
praef. in  
Dan.

him as an Authour inspired by God, and although they own him not to be a Prophet, yet they deny not but he has writ Prophecies. The Controversie which is betwixt them and us in this point, is but a subtilty and a pure question of name, as we shall easily understand by the series of this discourse: nevertheless a learned Protestant, who a while since has writ in favour of the Septuagint Translatours, highly blames the ancient *Jews* for denying *Daniel* to be a Prophet, because they found themselves prest by the evidence of his Prophecy. But the authority of S. *Jerome* alone is sufficient to shew that the ancient *Jews* differ not in this point from the modern and that they always thought that the Book of *Daniel* was in the Collection of canonical Books. *Daniel* therefore is no less a Prophet than *Isaiah* and the rest of the Prophets. The Rabbins onely will have it that there are different degrees in Prophecies, as R. D. *Kimhi* has observ'd, whence they have taken occasion to establish these three different Classes of the holy Scriptures, which are nevertheless all compris'd under the general name of Prophecies. The *Psalms*, which the *Jews* place among the *Hagiographys* as well as the Book of *Daniel*, according to them contain several Prophecies concerning the *Messiah*. Don *Joseph Gebaia*, a Spanish *Jew*, intimates that his Fathers seem'd to prefer the *Psalms* before the *Prophecies*, by joining the *Psalms* to the Books of *Moses*, and that they have shewn the great conformity between these two Works. When they place *Daniel* with *Esdras* and *Nehemiah* they had regard onely to the History which is related in this Book, which argues not but that they acknowledge them to be true Prophecies: moreover the *Jews* have denied *David* and *Daniel* the name of Prophets, by reason their way of living in the fatigues of the Court was not agreeable to the ordinary life of other Prophets.

Vossius.

*Kimhi* in  
praef. in  
Psalms.

Don Joseph  
in praef. in  
Psalms.

To proceed, they comprehend under the name of Prophets the History of *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Samuel* and the *Kings*, which they call *Nebaim Kisonim*, or *First Prophets*, to distinguish them from *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel* and the twelve little Prophets, which they make but one Volume of, and they call all these Prophets *Nebaim Aharonim* or *Last Prophets*. They have therefore subdivided the Prophets into two Classes, and they call all equally prophetical, although part of them contains Histories onely, because they have all been writ by true Prophets. There remain

eleven

eleven other Books which they have call'd *Cetuvim* or *Hagiographys*, which are the *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Job*, *Daniel*, *Esdra*s and the *Chronicles*, to which we are to add the *Canticles*, *Ruth*, *Lamentations*, *Ecclesiastes* and *Esther*. They call these five last Books the five Volumes, and they ordinarily make them follow the *Pentateuch*, for their particular conveniency, because they read them in the Synagogues upon particular days in the year. For example at *Easter* they read the *Canticles*, at *Pentecost* *Ruth*, at the Feast of the *Tents* or *Tabernacles* *Esther*, and so of the others.

R. Ephod.  
prof. in  
Gram.  
R. Abrav.  
prof. in  
Jof.

If we will rely upon the Testimony of two learned and cunning Rabbins, the whole œconomy of the holy Scriptures has been taken from the three several divisions the Tabernacle and Temple were compos'd of. The Law of *Moses*, as the first and principal part of the Scripture, answers to the place call'd the *Holy of Holies*, or, to speak more properly, to the most holy place, where the Ark and the Book of the Law were; the Book of the Prophets agrees with the *Sanctuary* or holy place, in which the Table, the Candlestick, and the golden Altar were plac'd; lastly, the *Hagiographys* answer to the *Porch*, where was the Altar of burnt Offerings. And that which made the proportions, according to the Rabbins, of these divisions, as well of the Tabernacle as of the Scripture, is that the Tabernacle represented the three Worlds, which are the intellectual one, where God resides with his Angels, the celestial one, where the most pure Bodies are, and the terrestrial or inferiour one. The Books of *Moses* ought to be placed in the intellectual one, forasmuch as his Prophecies are of a singular nature, and that he is the onely Prophet to whom God face to face communicated himself. The other Prophets whom God has not commun'd with but through the means of his Angels, ought to hold but the second rank, and be placed in the celestial World; lastly, the *Hagiographys*, which are the last degree of Prophecy, are to be placed in the inferiour World: this thought has more subtilty than solidity in it, 'tis a new invention of the Rabbins without foundation in Scripture. It is much more probable that the historical Books have retained the name of propheticall because the publick Writers, who had the care of collecting these publick Acts, called themselves Prophets, as we have already declared. The Rabbins moreover add that the *Hagiographys* have been called

called *Cetuphim* or *Writings*, because the Authours of them were inspired by God during the time onely they writ them; but 'tis not necessary to dwell any longer upon these vain subtilties of the Rabbins, which have no other support but their imaginations.

We have likewise thought fit to pass over in silence many other observations of this nature concerning the different degrees of Prophecy, which are explained at large by R. *Moses*, Son of *Maimon*, but after so philosophical a manner that we ought not to regard it. I have related the opinion of the *Jews* in this point, to shew that they agree wholly with the Christians, except in some subtilties invented by the Rabbins. *David* and *Daniel* are acknowledged by the *Jews* as well as *Christians* for true Prophets, whose Books were full of Prophecies concerning the *Messiah*, the difference between the one and the other is onely in name and manner.

As the Rabbins are wholly ignorant of the reasons of this general division of the holy Scriptures into three Classes, they find great difficulty in explaining the order wherein every particular Book has been placed, they acknowledge that the Books of *Ruth*, *Daniel* and the *Psalms* contain Prophecies, or that they have been written by Prophets, yet nevertheless they place them among the *Hagiographys*. *Abravanel* affirms that the Book of *Ruth* was compos'd in favour of the Family of *David*, by *Samuel* who was a Prophet, and to speak conformably to his principles he adds that *Samuel* writ it without any express command from God, and that what is comprehended therein has not been inspired after the same manner with the Prophecies, which he confirms by the Tradition of his Doctours; who have rank't this Book in the third Classe; he says moreover that were it true that the Book of *Ruth* ought to be placed among the Prophets with the *History of Judges* there would nevertheless have been reason to have join'd it with the *Psalms*, because *Samuel* compos'd this Work for the honour of *David*, and that it is for this reason the ancients have plac't it with the *Psalms*, although in effect it belongs to the second Classe: whence it appears that the Rabbins, who have been so nice upon the Traditions of their ancient Doctours, have had no certain and evident principle for the settling these three different ranks of sacred Scriptures.

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The same *Abravanel*, speaking of the Book of *Job*, which is among the *Hagiographys*, says that if *Moses* be the Authour of it as is observed in the *Talmud*, it belongs to the first Classe, that if *Job* were in the time of the *Judges*, as *Eliezer* affirms, it ought to be placed in the second, and lastly, if he were in the time of *Esther* and *Abashuerus*, as *R. Joshua*, Son of *Caraha*, has pretended, it belongs to the third Classe, wherefore in all this there are onely ill-grounded conjectures, and nothing of certainty. We ought rather to ascribe the holy Scriptures to Prophets in general, and with the *Caraites* Jews call the whole Bible Prophecy than to be so curious in questions of names.

As to what belongs to the order that ought to be kept in every particular Book, there is nothing of certainty about this Subject, either among the *Jews* or *Christians*. The manuscript Copies of the Bible differ often among themselves. The Spanish *Jews* agree not always with the French and Germans, sometimes convenience has been regarded, and I believe for this very reason most join the five little Volumes we before spoke of with the five Books of *Moses*, because they read in the Synagogue the two *Pentateuchs*: these are customs peculiar to the *Jews*, which the *Christians* ought not to follow in the Hebrew Bibles which they cause to be printed. *Munster* seems to have play'd too much the *Jew* in the Hebrew Bible he has publish'd with his Latin Translation on the side, because he has not placed the Prophecy of *Daniel* in the rank of other Prophets as it is in the ancient Interpreters. The Tradition even of the *Jews* seems to have nothing of certainty in this point, because the *Talmud* and the *Mazoret* agree not altogether about the order of the Prophecys: the *Talmudists* place *Jeremiah* first and before *Isaiah*, whereas the *Mazorets* place *Isaiah* the first. *Elias Levita* observes that all the good Spanish manuscript Copies keep this last order, but that the German and French Copies keep the order observed in the *Talmud*. The Books *Hagiographys* are likewise differently placed in the *Talmud* and *Mazoretick* Copies. The Spaniards observe the order of the *Mazoret* after the same manner as in the Books of the Prophets, but the Germans depart not from the Tradition of the *Talmudist* Doctours.

*Cassiodore* has likewise observed this difference in the ancient Greek and Latin Copies of the Bible. He has made three Chapters

Munster.

Elias Levit.  
pr. f. 3. in  
Mazoret.

Cassiod.

Chapters in his Book of *Divine Readings* which are intitled the division of the Scripture according to *S. Jerome*, the division of the Scripture according to *S. Augustin*, the division of the same Scripture according to the Septuagint. There may many other reflections be made upon these sorts of divisions of the Bible in general, but it is sufficient to have observ'd what is most necessary.

## C H A P. X.

*The reasons of Joseph d'Albo to shew that the Law of Moses has never been corrupted. The Examination of the Pentateuch of the Samaritans, and whether it may be proved from thence that we have to this day the ancient Copy of the Books of Moses.*

ALL the *Jews* agree not that the Hebrew Copies have been corrupted during the time of their Captivity in *Babylon*. *Joseph d'Albo*, a learned Spanish Rabbin, pretends in his Book of the grounds of the Law, that the five Books of *Moses* are come to them by Tradition without any change, and the reasons which he alleges are, that during the time of the first Temple there always were Priests and Doctours who taught the Law; and as it may be objected to him that there have been idolatrous Kings who despised the Law of *Moses*, he answers that the idolatrous Kings never were without Prophets, who always made the people observe the Law, which Law was publick and in the mouth of every particular person. This Rabbin brings several other reasons to shew, that, notwithstanding the idolatry and destruction of the first Temple, the Law of *Moses* has been intirely preserved by the means of Prophets and other able persons who took care to preserve it. But as this opinion is contrary to experience, and as there are clear and evident proofs that the Law which we have this day in our Hebrew Copies is not altogether the same which was given to *Moses*, we shall not spend much time in examining these reasons, it is

Albo disc. 3.  
ch. 22. of  
the Book  
Ikkarim or  
Grounds.

L

sufficient

sufficient that we find there are changes and additions, whether it be that it was changed before the Captivity or during the Captivity, as many Rabbins assure us, or that the changes happened in after time by the negligence of the *Jews*.

The onely reason which deserves a diligent examination is that which he brings from the *Samaritans*, who have likewise a Hebrew Copy of the Law writ in Samaritan Characters, and yet it is certain that these *Samaritans* had never any part in the Captivity of the other *Jews*, to which this corruption of the Hebrew Copies is ascribed, because they were led Captive before the *Jews* into another place. It is impossible that this agreement of Copies between the *Samaritans* and the *Jews*, should proceed from that their Books have been corrupted after the same manner. Besides, it seems not reasonable to say that the *Samaritans* took a Copy of the Law from the *Jews* after their return to *Jerusalem*, because they were then declared enemies of the *Jews*, and opposed them in all things. What yet confirms this opinion is that the *Samaritans* have preserved the ancient Hebrew Characters which were from the time of *Moses*, and consequently the ancient Copies, whereas the *Jews*, at their return from their Captivity, took those of the Chaldeans which they make use of to this day.

To clear this difficulty we shall in few words relate the History of these *Samaritans* which may be seen more at large in the Bible, and History of *Josephus*. There happened under *Rehoboam*, Son of *Solomon*, a Schism amongst the Israelites which divided them into two Kingdoms; one of these Kingdoms was called *Judah*, and contained those who remained at *Jerusalem* stedfast to *Rehoboam* and the Family of *David*, the others preserved the ancient name of the Israelites and left *Jerusalem* under the conduct of *Jeroboam*. The capital City of their Kingdom was *Samaria*, whence they have been called *Samaritans*. This Schism having weakned the Republick of the Hebrews, *Salmanassar* King of *Assyria* conquer'd *Samaria*, and sent all the people Captive into remote Countries, and at the same time planted in their places Colonies of Babylonians, Cutheans, and other Idolaters, but these finding themselves devoured by Lyons and other Beasts, demanded an Israelitish Priest, to teach them the Law and customs of the Country they came to inhabit, which was granted them, and this Priest taught them the Law of *Moses*,  
and

and it is probable that he brought them a Copy of the Law he was to teach them.

As the ten Tribes who followed *Jeroboam's* side, did not make an entire apostacy from the Religion of the Hebrews, they had without doubt preserved the Law of *Moses*, and it is this Law which the Priest, sent by the King *Salmanassar*, taught the inhabitants of this new Colony, who were not afterwards troubled by Beasts which before devoured them. 'Tis true that the people retain'd something of their old Idolatry, but that hindred not but that they also observed the Law of *Moses*, and that they offered Sacrifices unto God according to the Ceremonies of this Law, although they offered others according to their ancient superstition. However it was with these old *Samaritans*, it is certain that they who are now so called, have the five Books of *Moses* writ in the Hebrew Tongue, and in the ancient Hebrew Characters which are now called Samaritan; they have preserv'd nothing of their Idolatry, on the contrary they observe the Law of *Moses* more after the Letter than the *Jews*; and the explanation in the Glosses contain'd in the *Talmud*, and which the *Jews* exactly follow, are altogether unknown to them. They have no other canonical Books but the *Pentateuch*, because all the other sacred Books which are in the Jewish Canon were certainly not publish't in the time when they made their Schism, and that is the reason that they acknowledge nothing for divine and authentick but the Law of *Moses*. Let us now see whether their Copy ought to be prefer'd before that of the *Jews*, or whether we ought to follow one and the other as Copies of the same Original, which have each of them their perfections and faults.

We cannot certainly be assured that the Cutheans and other people who came to inhabit *Samaria* had Copies of the Law, because the Priest who was sent to them might have taught them it, with the Ceremonies of *Moses* without giving them Copies of a Law which they could not have understood, it being writ in a Language which was altogether strange to them, and in Characters of which they had no knowledge; but when they had quitted their ancient Idolatry and had built a Temple on the Mountain *Garazim* where they offered Sacrifices, as the *Jews* did at *Jerusalem*, it was necessary they should have the five Books of *Moses*, and the agreement that is between their

ancient Copy and that of the *Jews*, makes me think that at that time they did but Copy that of the *Jews*, and that the differences which are at present proceed from Transcribers, excepting some words which have been chang'd on purpose to maintain their own opinions and prejudices.

'Tis true, it seems more probable they should have recourse to the Israclites or the ten Tribes that *Salmanassar* carried into his Countries, and not to the *Jews* who were their enemies; but besides that since that time we have heard nothing of those ten Tribes which returned not from their Captivity, it is better to judge of the Hebrew Samaritan Copy by what appears to our sight, than by reasons founded on far-fetcht conjectures. Now it is certain that all the examples we have hitherto brought to shew that *Moses* could not be the Authour of the whole *Pentateuch* as it is at present, are the same as to the Samaritan Copy, and therefore we cannot say that the *Samaritans* have preserved a Copy of the ancient Original which was before the Captivity of the *Jews*; I acknowledge they have had no hand in the Collection which the *Jews* made of the holy Scriptures at their return from *Babylon*, but since the changes are the same in both Copies, we must necessarily conclude that the *Samaritans* have copied from the *Jews*, at least that before the Captivity there were not the same additions and changes in the *Pentateuch* as there have been since, and then we must say that the *Jews* revised the *Pentateuch* long time before *Esdra*s, and that the first Originals were lost before the Schism of the ten Tribes. The little difference which is between these two Copies, since the two Sects have had no commerce together, is likewise a proof of their being taken from the same Copy. But it is not likely that the *Jews*, among whom the body of Religion has been always preserved, have borrow'd their Copies from the *Samaritans*, who were Schismatics.

As for the ancient Hebrew Characters which are pretended to be kept by the *Samaritans*, one cannot from thence certainly conclude that they have preserved the ancient Hebrew Copy of the Law, as soon as they had a Temple, and the Books of *Moses* they writ them in their ordinary Characters, as they yet write the Arabick in these ancient *Samaritan* Letters; this custom has likewise spread it self over other Nations of the *Levant*, and we see that the Syrians whether *Jacobites* or *Maronites*

*nites* or *Nestorians* write the Arabian Language in Syriack Characters; the *Jews* of *Constantinople* likewise write the Persian, the Arabick, the vulgar Greek and the Spanish in Hebrew Characters, as appears from two tetraple *Pentateuchs* which they have printed in all these Languages at *Constantinople*. The German *Jews* likewise often write the high Dutch in Hebrew Characters, wherefore the Characters alone are not a sufficient proof to shew that the *Samaritans*, having preserved the ancient manner of writing which was used before the Captivity, have likewise preserved the ancient Books without any change: but for the further understanding this matter, we will particularly examin the differences of these two Copies, and, by comparing them together, we shall easily judge which of the two ought to be prefer'd.

Father *Morin* of the Oratory, who was the first that publish'd a Copy of the Hebrew Samaritan *Pentateuch*, seems to have prefer'd it too much before the Hebrew *Pentateuch* of the *Jews*; on the other side *Hottinger* and some others, who have in this condemn'd the opinion of *F. Morin*, have not been moderate enough in speaking of the *Samaritans*; and what is altogether surprising is that several Protestants, who have not very much respect for Tradition, have yet made use of it as a strong proof to defend the authority of the Hebrew Text of the *Jews*, and to decry at the same time the *Samaritan* Copy. They say that the Hebrew Copy of the *Jews* ought to be prefer'd before that of the *Samaritans*, because these last are Schismatics, whereas the *Jews* have always remained in the Religion of their Fathers, and have always had a long succession of true Priests. But it often happens that men, being the repositories of Traditions, put in something of their own invention, and then it is hard to distinguish the true Traditions from the false; it may have happened then that the *Jews*, who make Tradition equivalent to the Scripture, may have rather alter'd the Text of the Law than the *Samaritans*, who equal not the Gloss of their Doctours with the Text of *Moses*. We ought then to have recourse to more particular proofs to know which of the two Copies is the best.

We ought not then to confound with the Hebrew Samaritan Text, a Samaritan Translation which is printed with this Text, nor another Greek Translation made by the *Samaritans*, which we have

have nothing of but some fragments in ancient Ecclesiastical Authours. These two Translations which we shall speak of in our Second Book cannot absolutely be the rule of the several readings which are in the Hebrew Jewish *Pentateuch*, because the Translatour takes a certain liberty which often carries him from his Text. We shall then regulate these varieties by the Hebrew Samaritan Text, which being a true Text as well as the Copy of the *Jews*, we ought not to say as some have done that it has been taken from the Greek Translation of the Septuagint, because a Translation is made from the Original and not the Original from a Translation. When the Hebrew Samaritan Text agrees with the Translation of the Septuagint, and that they two differ from the Hebrew Jewish Text, it is most probable to say that the Grecian Interpreters have made use of the same Hebrew Copy as the Samaritans. Nevertheless as the Greek Tongue was heretofore in use among the Samaritans, and that they have made use of a Greek Translation, it might happen they may have taken something from the Translation of the Septuagint, and added something to their Text to make it more intelligible. What may support this conjecture is that there were *Samaritans* in *Egypt* when the Septuagint Translation was much in vogue. *Massius* himself believes that the Hebrew Tongue being little understood in those days, they made use of the Septuagint Translation as well as the Hellenist *Jews*; and there are yet *Samaritans* at *Grand Cairo*, who perhaps are descended from these ancient *Samaritans* of *Egypt*, as those of *Sichem* of *Napoloufe* are apparently descended from the ancient *Samaritans*, who dwelt in that Country. Let us now pas from conjectures to truth, and examine in particular the Hebrew Text, and see if it has any advantage over the Copy of the *Jews*.

Massius.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

*A particular examination of the Hebrew Samaritan Text, whether it ought to be prefer'd to the Hebrew Text of the Jews. Divers examples of various readings, with reflections.*

WE ought to suppose as a certain truth that before men gave themselves to follow the correction of the *Mazoret* or *Jewish* Criticks, which we shall hereafter speak of, the Transcribers seldom troubled themselves with adding or cutting off of certain Letters which properly constitute the Vowels in the Hebrew Tongue; which is the reason that the Hebrew Samaritan Text often differs from the Hebrew Jewish Text, and that sometimes in the Samaritan Copy words are found with the Letters *Vau* and *Jod* which are wanting in the Hebrew Copy, whence *Father Morin* concludes that the Hebrew Samaritan Text ought to be prefer'd before the Hebrew Jewish Text. But he seems not to reason rightly on this matter, since on the other side there are places where these very same Letters *Vau* and *Jod* are wanting in the Samaritan Copy, and are found in the Copy of the *Jews*. Wherefore in this the *Samaritans* have no advantage over the *Jews*, nor on the contrary the *Jews* over the *Samaritans*.

The same *F. Morin*, who was so much affected with the Hebrew Samaritan Copy, brings the word *Meorot* for example of these varieties, which is writ in the Jewish Copy without the Letter *Vau*, whereas in the Samaritan Copies it is writ with two *Vau's* or two *O's*; he enlarges very much upon this example to shew that the Hebrew Samaritan text ought to be preferred before the Hebrew Jewish Text; then he adds the dreams of the Rabbins, who justifie in this place the want of these two *Vau's* in their Copies, but he had done more to the purpose had he remark't, with *Rabbi Aben Esra*, that the Transcribers have taken the liberty of adding or leaving out these sorts of Letters, and that the mysteries some Rabbins bring to explain the absence or presence of these Letters are pure inventions of their own imaginations which have no foundation at all. This  
Father

Father *Morin* ought to have observed, instead of relating stories at his own pleasure, to arraign the *Jews* in praising the *Samaritans*.

There are moreover certain diversities of reading in the Hebrew Jewish Texts which are not in the Copies of the *Samaritans*, and these varieties which we shall after speak of in treating of the *Mazoret* are called *Keri* and *Cetib* which happen when we correct in the Margin the reading of the Text where we think there is a fault. Father *Morin* relies much upon these varieties to shew that the Hebrew Samaritan Text is more exact than that of the *Jews*, because there are none of these various readings, and he gives for example the word *Nabara*, which is writ without the Letter *He* in several places of *Genesis* in the Hebrew Jewish Text, whereas it is writ as it ought to be with *He* in the Hebrew Samaritan Copy. But what may be concluded from these several readings is that the *Mazorets* have been too scrupulous in writing their Copies, not daring to put in the true reading into the body of the Text, which they have onely mark't in the Margin, thinking it sufficient to say that it ought to be read as it is writ in the Margin. Which gives the Hebrew Samaritan Text no advantage at all over the Copy of the *Jews*, since they have observed it ought to be read as it is in the Samaritan Copy. The *Mazorets* have nevertheless been too scrupulous in fearing to put into the Text the true reading when it was evident, and that the other was a manifest error of the Transcriber, but their scruple is not altogether ill-grounded in other places, where one is not assured of the true reading, and then I would prefer the Hebrew Jewish Text which marks the varieties before the Hebrew Samaritan which leaves them out; for it sometimes falls out that the reading in the Margin is better than that which is in the Text, wherefore the *Jews* on these occasions had reason to preserve the various readings which they had found in different Copies, and to leave the Reader the liberty of chusing which he thought was most agreeable to sense. To which may be added, that the number of these several readings, chiefly of those which we manifestly find to be errors of Transcribers, is not so great in the good manuscripts of the Bible, as in those which have been printed with too much Jewish superstition. This I have observed in reading some manuscript Copies where I have found the  
word

word *Nabara* writ with the Letter *He* in the Text without any remark in the Margin, after the same manner it is in the Samaritan Copy. By this means many little things may be justified which are in the printed Jewish Copies and which are not in good Manuscripts. Father *Morin* had done much better to have consulted them than so easily to arraign the *Jews* for little trifles which are easie to be redressed by the rules of Criticisme and the ancient Copies of the Bible.

There is another sort of various reading in the Hebrew Samaritan Text, which proceeds from several Letters that are like one another, or are pronounced after the same manner. *Hottinger*, who was as much taken with the Hebrew Jewish Text as Father *Morin* was with the Hebrew Samaritan, pretends from thence to prove that the *Samaritans* have writ their Copy from that of the *Jews*: but allowing it were so, *Hottin-<sup>Hottinger.</sup>*ger stretches his principles too far, which endeavours to prove that the *Samaritans* have read in some places otherwise than they ought to have read, to have confounded certain Letters one with the other, which according to him they could not have done if they had not transcribed the Hebrew Jewish Copy, because these Letters have not the same resemblance among the *Samaritans* as among the *Jews*. But he has not seriously considered the nature of these Letters, which the *Samaritans* may have often took one for the other and yet they not resembled one another. For example, the Letters *He* and *Heth* were heretofore pronounc't (as S. *Jerome* informs us) after the same manner, and all the difference betwixt them is that *Heth* is a little more aspirate than *He*; so when the *Samaritans* write in their Copies one for the other, 'tis not because their figures are alike in the Hebrew Jewish Alphabet, but because it is ordinary for Transcribers to confound the Letters which have the same sound. This is the reason that in the Hebrew Samaritan Copy the Letters *Aleph* and *Ain* are sometimes confounded, because their pronunciation is almost the same; these are two *A's* according to S. *Jerome* one of which is pronounced stronger than the other: whether you write these Letters in Samaritan or Jewish Characters the pronunciation will be always alike, and by consequence the Transcribers will easily take one for the other: there are moreover certain other Letters which resemble one another as well in the Samaritan as the Jewish Alphabet.



It is necessary to make all these observations if one would understand the nature of the various readings of the Hebrew Jewish and the Hebrew Samaritan Texts. In observing the causes of every one, we may find what it is that makes a true variation, and what is to be ascribed to the error of the Transcriber, and by this means we may judge of the places where the Copy of the *Jews* ought to be reform'd by that of the *Samaritans*, and on the contrary where that of the *Samaritans* ought to be corrected by that of the *Jews*. Besides this, we ought to have several good manuscript Copies of the Hebrew Samaritan Text to make the Criticisme, and then we should not leave so many faults of the Transcribers as there are in the printed Copy.

Besides these varieties, which consist but in Letters, there are several others more considerable, which regard whole words and intire phrases, and this we ought to examin according to the rules of Criticisme, and not upon the prejudices which some bring in the favour of the *Jews*. We ought to suppose that the *Samaritan Pentateuch* is a Copy of the Law of *Moses* as well as the *Pentateuch* of the *Jews* and not a Translation, although there are conjectures to prove the *Samaritans* have reformed some places by the Greek Septuagint Translation. And moreover in reading the *Samaritan Pentateuch* there are certain repetitions and additions to be found which cannot be attributed but to Transcribers, whence it is easie to judge that the *Samaritan* Transcribers have sometimes took too much liberty. This principle will stand us in much stead in the examination we are about to make of the several readings and alterations of the two Hebrew Texts, the Jewish and Samaritan.

We reade in the Hebrew Jewish Text in the 2d Chapter of *Genesis* [*God ended his work on the seventh day*] whereas it is in the Hebrew Samaritan Text [*the sixth day*] which seems to make better sense. The Greek Translation of the Septuagint and the Syriack agree with the Copy of the *Samaritans*, but the same consequence cannot be drawn from these Translations as from the Samaritan Copy, which is no less the Hebrew Text than the Hebrew Copy of the *Jews*; this variety may be therefore remark't as a several reading, unless we pretend that the *Samaritans* who reade the Bible in Greek have been the cause of this amendment, and that they have took it from the Septuagint.

tuagint Translation, but nothing but conjectures can be made, and it may be that the Hebrew Copy which the Greek Interpreters made use of has agreed in this with that of the *Samaritans*.

The 8th Verse of the 4th Chapter of *Genesis* seems to be defective in the Hebrew Copy of the *Jews*, and that these words ought to be added [*Let us go into the field*] which are in the Samaritan Copy, as likewise in the Septuagint and Vulgar. The ancient Greek Scholiast upon the Translation of the Septuagint observes that these same words are in the Greek Translation of the *Samaritans*. But S. *Jerome* in his Hebrew questions upon *Genesis* pretends that it is an addition to the Hebrew Text, and likes it not although he is perswaded that the Text is defective in this place. S. *Jerome* by this seems not to have sufficiently considered that the Hebrew Samaritan Copy was a true Text, for he speaks as of a Translation where something may have been added. But one may remark S. *Jerome* sometimes very differently explains himself on the same Subject, according to the several places where he treats, and that in his questions upon *Genesis* he had no other design but to defend the Hebrew Jewish Text as the *Jews* of his time defended it. The Authour who has collected the Greek Scholias upon the Septuagint of *Franckfort* Edition hath not faithfully related what touches this Subject, having confounded without consideration the Greek Translation of the *Samaritans* with the Targum or Paraphrase of *Jerusalem*.

S. *Jerome* on the contrary accuses the *Jews* for having left the word *col* which signifies *all* out of the 27th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, that it might not be comprehended in the Malediction of the Law. Then he adds that this word *col* is in the Samaritan Copy. Father *Morin* insists strongly upon this observation which S. *Jerome* has made in his Commentary on the Epistle of S. *Paul* to the *Galatians*, as if the Argument of S. *Paul* was of no force by omitting this word, but S. *Jerome* seems to have been too curious in this place against the *Jews*, for whether we reade [*all*] in the singular or [*all*] in the plural with the Septuagint and with S. *Paul*, or whether we reade it not at all with the *Jews*, the sense of the words is nevertheless the same.

We read in the Hebrew Jewish Copy after this manner [*Cursed be he that persisteth not in the words of this Law*] and in the Hebrew Samaritan Copy [*cursed be he that persists not in all the words of this Law*] and lastly, in the Translation of the Septuagint which S. Paul has followed [*cursed be whosoever persists not in all the words of this Law.*]

Now I understand not how all the force of S. Paul's Argument consists in these words *whosoever* and *all*, since according to the rule of the Dialect the indefinite has the same force as the universal, we ought then to examin when it concerns Criticisme whether what the Fathers say is just and well grounded. S. Jerome speaks not thus in his questions upon *Genesis*; moreover in reading many Hebrew Manuscripts I have often enough found that they agree not always in these sorts of common words which the Grammarians call notes of universality; they are in some and not in others, which without doubt proceeds from Transcribers. It is the same with the words *Jehovah* and *Elohim*, which are sometimes put one for the other: but it is not necessary to stay any longer upon these trifles, or to make a long catalogue of the differences betwixt the Hebrew Jewish and that of the Samaritan Copy, these various readings are most of them collected in the sixth Volume of the English *Polyglot*, we shall onely add some reflections on these varieties, which will be very usefull for the knowing the advantages and defects of these two Copies.

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## C H A P. XII.

### *Reflections upon the Hebrew Samaritan Text.*

ONE of the best proofs of the care which the *Samaritans* had in preserving their Copy of the Law is that we yet find it to agree in most places with the citations which are in the ancient Books, even to little niceties. We may consult upon this *Eusebius*, *Diodorus*, S. *Jerome*, S. *Cyrill*, *Procopius* and several other Fathers, who observed the various readings of the Samari-

Samaritan Copy, or rather of the Greek Translation made from the Hebrew Samaritan Text. *Hottinger*, who condemns this Text as not exact because there are sometimes *He's* for *Heb's* *Ain's* for *Aleph's*, ought rather to accuse the Transcribers than the Copies, which are easie to be corrected in manifest errors. In defect of the Hebrew Samaritan Copies we ought to have recourse to the Copies of the *Jems*, but if it happens that the two various readings make each of them a probable sense they ought to be mark't as varieties of two Copies from the same Original; for supposing that the Samaritan Copy was heretofore taken from that of the *Jems*, this will nevertheless prove that it was read in the ancient Hebrew Copy after this manner, it would not be necessary to print as has been already done the Hebrew Samaritan Copy, it is enough to put in the Margin of the ordinary Copies the various readings of the Samaritan, since it is certain that they are but two Copies of the same Original writ onely in different Characters.

As for the Greek Samaritan Translation when it agrees not with the Hebrew Samaritan Text, we are to seek out reasons according to the rules of Criticisme, it being to no purpose to multiply the various readings upon one Translation, unless there be evident proof that the Interpreter has read otherwise in his Copy, besides that the Translatour does not always follow his Text exactly and according to the Letter, there may likewise some alterations have happened in the Greek Samaritan Translation. Father *Morin* troubles himself to no purpose to find out reasons for the diversity of reading which he thought there was in the 50th Chapter of *Genesis* and the 19th Verse betwixt the Greek Samaritan Translation and the Samaritan Hebrew Text as it is at present. The Samaritan Interpreter has translated it into Greek [*I am fearing God*] whereas according to the Hebrew, were he *Jew* or *Samaritan*, it looks as if he ought to have translated it [*am I in the place of God?*] Father *Morin* and some other Criticks are very copious in shewing that there is a transposition of Letters in the Hebrew Words, but that is not necessary since it may be translated without changing any thing, *I am for God*, that is to say, *I fear God.*

*Suadias Gaion*, who read as we do at present, has translated after the same manner as the Greek Samaritan Translation, the same sense is likewise in the Chaldean Paraphrase of *Onkelos*, we ought

ought therefore to observe that the Grecian Interpreter of the Samaritans has not always translated according to the letter, but that sometimes he has neglected it to make the sense more proper. Moreover as there were not then points in the Hebrew Text which serve instead of Vowels, and which the Samaritans have not to this day, the Samaritan Interpreter has sometime read otherwise in putting other points than those which are at present in the Hebrew Jewish Text. Thus in the 8th Chapter of *Exodus* the 2d Verse he has translated [*Ravens*] where it ought to be translated [*a number of Flies or other little Animals.*]

It cannot be denied but in the Hebrew Samaritan Text there are some passages more neatly explain'd than in the Hebrew Jewish Text, and if the Samaritan Copy was but a Translation one may say the Translatour has added some words to take away obscurity. But question is here made of a Text not of a Translation, it is nevertheless evident on the one side that the Samaritans have made no scruple to change words in the Text having put for example *Garezim* for *Ebal*, and moreover they have taken whole Verses from one place to put them into others they belong not to, to make the discourse more plain, which makes the fidelity of the Samaritans to be questioned, and it is for this reason that I do not think it worth while to correct the Hebrew Text now in use by the Samaritan Hebrew Text, in places where the Samaritan Copy seems to be more clear than that of the *Jews*: in the 17th Chapter of *Exodus* the 40th Verse, 'tis in the Hebrew Jewish, *That the Children of Israel dwelt 430 years*, it is nevertheless certain that they staid not so long a time. The Hebrew Samaritan Text wholly takes away this difficulty by reading [*the stay of the Children of Israel and their Fathers*] which comprehends the time that they and their Fathers were as well in *Egypt* as the Land of *Canaan*. But it may be these words have been added to compleat the sense which was imperfect: and moreover the Rabbins expound no other ways this Verse which seems defective in the Text. The Seventy have likewise supply'd in their Translation the same thing as the Samaritans have, or perhaps have had Hebrew Copies where they read after that manner. The ancient *Jews* have observed in the *Talmud* that the Septuagint had corrected the Text in this place, which makes it appear that this reading of the Jewish Copy is not altogether new.

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There are several other examples where the Hebrew Samaritan Text is more plain than that of the *Jews*, whence Father *Morin* concludes that the Copy of the *Jews* is defective in those places, and that it ought to be reformed by that of the Samaritan. But it is probable enough that the Samaritans have took the liberty of adding words to the Text to render it more intelligible, and of expressing at length phrases which were too short, which rather will be an addition to the Samaritan Copies than a failure in the Jewish ones; for example, in the 2d Chapter of *Genesis* the 24th Verse, where it is in the Hebrew Jewish Text, *They shall be in one flesh*, we read in the Samaritan Copy *There shall be two of them in one flesh*. The Septuagint and Syriack Translation agree in the reading with the Samaritans, and perhaps this Nominative Case has been put in to make the thing more plain. Father *Morin* himself acknowledges that the Samaritans have not took care enough to preserve their Text in its purity; since he is of opinion that they have took some passages out of one place of *Moses's* Books, to place them in another place of those Books which they belong'd not to; which is not allowable under any pretence of a farther clearing of the matter; For example in the 24th Chapter of *Genesis*, and the 16th Verse, they have put these words of the 44th Chapter of the same Book and the 16th Verse; *He shall not be able to abandon his Father*; The same things may be seen in many other places not necessary to be here related. Nevertheless Father *Morin* endeavours to justify them by the example of the Fathers who have made such additions, when the same thing was related in several places, but more abridg'd in one place than in another. For then, says Father *Morin*, to make the sense more clear, they have added in another place what they thought was wanting. He brings *Origen* for another example, who made additions to the Septuagint to compleat what was wanting by mingling with it the *Theodoret* Translation. But all these examples are beside the purpose, and plainly shew that the Samaritans have took a great deal of liberty in making additions to the Original, and therefore their Copy cannot be said to be a true one. The Fathers have been permitted to explain the holy Scriptures after this manner, because there is a great deal of difference betwixt explaining of a Text and copying of it faithfully; And moreover the example of *Origen* makes against

Fa. Morin  
in exerc.  
Samar.

Father

Father *Morin*, for *Origen's* design was to give an abridgment of all the Editions of the Bible, and to doe it more conveniently, he onely made a body of them all, by distinguishing nevertheless the one from the other by certain marks which the Grammarians then made use of.

We ought from all these observations to conclude that the *Samaritans* not having faithfully translated the Hebrew Text in some places, we ought to have recourse to the Jewish Copy, which nevertheless hinders us not from correcting sometimes the Hebrew Text of the *Jews* by the *Samaritan*: They are two Copies from the same Original, each of which having its failures and perfections, the one may help the other, instead of condemning the Jewish Copy where it is more restrain'd than that of the *Samaritans*; on the contrary it is a sign that it comes more near the Original, especially when the sense is compleat; and we ought to mistrust the too great liberty the *Samaritans* have taken in the making of their Copy; Moreover I speak not here of the varieties which are in the Chronology, because I shall treat of them hereafter.

What has already been said of the divers readings, sufficiently demonstrates that what *S. Jerome* says of the *Pentateuch* of the *Samaritans* ought not to be took according to the Letter, when he affirms that their Copy differs from the Jewish one but in Characters. *Samaritani etiam Pentateuchum Mosi totidem literis scriptitant figuris tantum & apicibus discrepantes.* By the word *apices* ought not to be understood real points, as *William Postell* has thought, and after him *Hottinger*: For the *Samaritans* never made use of these points, as the *Jews* for some ages have done instead of Vowels; but by the word *apices* is to be understood certain pointings of their Letters; and thus *S. Jerome* takes the word *apex* in other places; when for example he speaks of the difference which there is betwixt *Daleth* and *Resh* in the Hebrew Jewish Alphabet.

The *Samaritans* nevertheless have in their Copies certain points which serve onely to separate words one from another, which has been observed by the Greek and Latin Grammarians. They have likewise marks to distinguish the periods and other parts of discourse. Moreover they put points over certain words when they are to be taken in an extraordinary signification; but all this is far different from what the *Jews* call points, which

Hieron.  
Prol. Gal.

Postel. in  
Alp. 12.  
Ling.  
Hotting.  
in exerc.  
Antimor.

which they to this day use instead of Vowels. *Postel*, who has heard the *Samaritans* read the Text of the Law, testifies they pronounce the Hebrew words very ill; and moreover adds that he brought into *France* a Copy of their Grammar writ in Arabic and Samaritan Characters. But perhaps *Postel* judg'd of their pronunciation by that which he himself had learnt; for it is certain that the *Jews* of several Countries pronounce Hebrew very differently, although they all agree in the vowels or points; and therefore we can say nothing for certain of the manner of the *Samaritans* pronouncing the words of the Law, without consulting them more particularly upon this Subject.

Postel. in  
Alph. 12.  
Ling.

### C H A P. XIII.

*Of the Samaritan Characters. Their derivation. Of the Phœnician Letters. Explanation of some passages of the Greek Fathers touching the Samaritan Copies of the Letter Thau.*

IT would be unnecessary here to mention the Samaritan Characters, which by antiquity have been thought to be the first Hebrew Letters, were there not some new Doctours, who, being much affected with the Hebrew Copy of the *Mazoret Jews*, oblige us to speak of them. *S. Jerome* assures us that *Esdra* made use of new Characters at the return from Captivity, and that the ancient ones are those which the *Samaritans* have. No body doubted of this in *S. Jerome's* time. *Eusebius* was of the same opinion before him. *Postel*, who travell'd long time in the *Levant*, and inform'd himself of these Characters from the *Jews*, has likewise confirm'd *S. Jerome's* opinion, by producing the inscription of several pieces, and the ancient Jewish monies, where these words are written in Samaritan Characters, *Jerusalem the Holy*, and some others; which the *Samaritans* cannot have written after their Schism, because they were declared enemies both to this City and to its Temple; we ought therefore to ascribe them to the *Jews* of *Jerusalem* before their Captivity. *Blancuccius, Villalpandus,*

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*pandus*, Father *Morin*, *Walton*, and several other learned men have cited the same pieces to shew that the Samaritan Characters at present are the ancient and first Hebrew Letters. *R. Azarias*, and some other *Jews* have likewise quoted them in their Works upon the same account. In a word the most learned and judicious Criticks, as well Catholics as Protestants, have followed this opinion. *Josephus Scaliger* has gone so far as to call them Asses who are of another mind: and in effect there are none but fancifull and affected persons who deny so certain a truth as this is. Those who are of the contrary opinion rely upon what *Buxtorf* has writ, without taking notice that he had too rashly engag'd himself to defend the Hebrew Jewish Copy against *Ludovicus Capellus*. 'Tis true that *Buxtorf* has writ a learned Discourse concerning the first Characters of the Hebrews, but as this learning is taken from the Rabbins, who have no certain knowledge of this matter, we ought not wholly to rely thereon. *Lightfoot*, who is likewise of *Buxtorf*'s opinion, could not deny but that the *Talmudists* are against him. *Schikardus* has likewise brought some proofs in favour of the Jewish Characters, but at the same time he shews that he was wholly ignorant in this point. For what is there more ridiculous than to believe with some Rabbins, that the *Samaritans* have not in their Alphabet the three Hebrew Letters *Aleph*, *Heth* and *Ain*, and to conclude from thence as he does, that the Hebrew Text could not be writ in Samaritan Characters before *Esdra*? He ought to have observ'd that the *Jews*, being enemies to the *Samaritans*, have imposed on them in several things, and chiefly in this. Nevertheless most of the Hebricians credit what they find in the Books of the Rabbins without examining their reasons. *Buxtorf*, Father and Son, have for this reason espous'd several false opinions which they have endeavour'd afterwards to maintain. As they were very understanding in the Jewish learning, so likewise have they not wanted many followers who have blindly taken their part. The Question as to the Samaritan Characters is of this nature. *Walton*, who was not so understanding in the Hebrew as the two *Buxtorfs*, has nevertheless been more judicious, and had reason to think that the opinion of *S. Jerom* ought to be preferr'd before that of half-learned men, who therefore have rail'd against him in injurious terms. I speak

Lightfoot  
ad c. 4.  
Matth.  
Schikard  
ad calcem  
juris Reg.  
Heb.

speak here of some Protestants who could not suffer that *Walton*, who was likewise a Protestant, should put in his great Preface to the English *Polyglot*, several opinions which they thought were contrary to the received opinion of their Religion, and amongst others that which establish't the antiquity of the Samaritan Characters.

*Matthias Wasmouth*, in a Book printed at *Rostock*, highly complains that their Church, which he calls reform'd, suffers *Walton*, who makes use (says he) of the testimony of Papists to destroy the ancient original of the holy Characters. But in this he shews his ignorance, since *Walton* has maintain'd his opinion from the authority of *Drusus*, *Scaliger*, *Causabon*, *Vossius*, *Amama*, *Bochartus*, *Capellus*, and several other learned Protestants. They are therefore onely ignorant and fancifull persons who with *Buxtorf* have denied that the Samaritan Characters were the ancient Hebrew ones. *Buxtorf* himself onely took this side because he was oblig'd to answer a Book of *Capel's* intituled, *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, where this Authour proves the novelty of the Hebrew Jewish Characters by the antiquity of the Samaritan Letters.

Wal. in  
vind. S. Heb.  
Scrip.

Wherefore not to speake of a thing which has been treated of already by several learned men, I am contented with giving an account of the disputes which have been bandyed upon this subject, and of the success which they have had. Nevertheless one may read what *Walton* has collected in the Prolegomena's of the English Bible, where he has gathered together judiciously enough what was the best. I shall onely remark that many of the Samaritan and Chaldee Characters which are now called Hebrew have in their original seem'd to be the same, but there has happen'd to them what ordinarily does to other Languages whose Characters change with the time, and when they pass from one place to another. Thus the Roman Characters have been changed under the Lombards and Goths. Even the Hebrew Jewish Characters are not every where of the same fashion, as it is easie to prove by comparing the Spanish with the Germans, and if we look upon manuscript Copies we shall find them different as to their Letters.

A learned Protestant has nevertheless much inveighed against those that believe that the Jewish Characters resemble much those of the Samaritans, and he grounds his opinion upon this,



that the *Jews* know them not and cannot read the Samaritan; but from the same reason might follow that the Characters of the Rabbinical Hebrew have not been taken from the ordinary Hebrew Characters, since those who read well the Hebrew do not always read the Rabbinical, chiefly in Manuscripts. Moreover those who very easily read the Syriack Letters, which the Jacobites and Maronites use, have a great deal to do to read the same Syriack Characters in the Books of the Nestorians, although it is certain in their original they are the same, and that this variety does not argue the Letters to be wholly different, no more than amongst us the Gothick Letters differ from the true Romans in their original.

The difference then betwixt the Jewish Characters and those of the Samaritans is, that those of the *Jews* are more plain and square, whereas the others have certain points or little dashes which join them together. The Hebrew Jewish *Beth* for example differs not from the Hebrew Samaritan *Beth*, but that the Hebrew Samaritan is join'd on the top and that the Jewish one is open; it is the same with the *Dalet* and *Resh*; we shall likewise find by diligent searching the Letters *Aleph*, *Teth*, *Caph*, *Mem*, *Nun*, *Ain*, *Coph*, to be the same in the Jewish and Samaritan Alphabets, onely the *Jews* have cut off something from the ancient Character of the *Samaritans*.

Before the *Jews* entred into the Land of *Canaan* this Character which we call *Samaritan* was in use as well as the Hebrew Language, so that it ought rather to be called the *Phœnician* Character than the *Samaritan* or *Hebrew*, and that which we call at present the *Hebrew* is the ancient *Chaldean* Character.

The Greek and Latin Letters have been taken from the Phœnician or Samaritan Characters, and not from the Jewish, which one may easily discover by comparing the Capital Greek and Latin Letters, which are the principal ones amongst the *Samaritans*, as *Postel* has very excellently observed in his Book of Originals, and after him *Bochartus* in his Book intituled *Phaleg*. The Greeks and after them the Latins have onely changed the shape of the Phœnician Letters, because they have not written from the right hand to the left as they, but from the left to the right; there is onely the Letter *P* which seems rather to have been taken from the Hebrew or Chaldee *Phe* than from the Samaritan, also that Letter is join'd on the top in the Hebrew and is open in the Phœnician

nician or Samaritan, contrary to the custom of other Letters: if we likewise examine the Syriack and Arabick Characters we shall find that some of them take their original from the Hebrew. But there has happened a greater change in the latter than of those of the Phœnician or Hebrew at this day: the reason of this resemblance of Characters proceeds from hence, that all these Tongues are no other than Dialects of one and the same Language, and as these Nations were divided, every one has reformed by little and little their Letters, to the end they might write with more easiness, and oftentimes according to the fancy of Writers, and this appears more in the Arabick than in others. The Arabians have brought in this great alteration in their Letters that they might more easily join them in writing, in which the *Jews* have imitated them in certain Characters which they call *Maskot* of an Arabick word.

Furthermore what we have already related touching the ancient Phœnician Letters, from which the Greek and Latin have drawn their original, was not altogether unknown to the Latins and Greeks, as these Verses of *Lucan* plainly shew.

*Phœnices primi fama si credimus ausi  
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.*

The Greeks have likewise acknowledged the Phœnicians for the inventours of the Greek Letters. I do not howsoever pretend to conclude from thence that the Phœnician or Samaritan Characters are the most ancient of all, but onely that we know none more ancient. It is onely probable that they are more ancient than those we at this day call Hebrew, which are the Letters which were in old time in use among the Chaldeans.

*Esdra*, or they who made the collection of the Scriptures after the Captivity, wrote it in Chaldee Characters, to the end the people, who were accustomed to those Letters during the time of their Captivity, might be able to read the Law of *Moses* and the other Books. The Samaritans on the contrary have always preserved the ancient Hebrew or Phœnician Characters. *Africanus*, *Eusebius* and *Georgius Syncellus* do confirm this truth, when they distinguish between the Hebrew Samaritan and the Hebrew Jewish, which ought to be understood onely of the Characters, which they pretend were more ancient among the *Samaritans* than among the *Jews*, who have took new ones from,

*Esdra*.

Voss. de  
Translat.  
Septuag.  
Inter.  
cap. 29.

*Esdras*. *Vossius* seems not to have understood *Africanus*, when he would prove from the words of *Syncellus*, which are onely an extract of *Africanus*, that this ancient Authour has assur'd us that the Hebrew Samaritan Text was more ancient than the Hebrew Jewish one. There is nothing in the words of *Syncellus* that can intimate this, but onely that the Copy of the Samaritans is a true Hebrew Copy, and a true Copy from the original of *Moses* as well as that of the *Jews*. This is what ought to be understood by these words of *Syncellus*, *A true and original Copy*.

*Eusebius* and *Africanus* concurr'd in this opinion when they call'd the *Samaritan* an ancient Copy, it was not the question whether the Copy of the *Samaritans* ought to be prefer'd before that of the *Jews* for antiquity, as *Vossius* has thought, but to give authority to the *Samaritan* Copy, forasmuch as it was not a simple Translation, but an Original as well as the Hebrew Text of the *Jews*, and from thence *Syncellus* excellently proves that the varieties of readings which were in the *Samaritan* Copy ought to be considered, which the *Jews* themselves acknowledge to be a true Text, writ in a Character more ancient than their Copy.

Vossius *ibid.*

*Euseb. Hist.*  
l. 6. c. 16.

*Vossius* seems likewise not to have understood the words of *Eusebius*, when he pretends to prove that *Origen* had a Hebrew Samaritan Text for his particular use. *Eusebius* onely says that *Origen* applied himself with so much care in the search of the holy Scriptures that he learnt the Hebrew Tongue, and that he had an Original of his own writ in Hebrew Characters. But *Vossius* has translated the words of *Eusebius* according to his own prejudice, and not according to the sense of the Greek words which he relates. There is not a word in that place of the *Samaritans* but of the *Jews*, and moreover mention is there made of a Hebrew Jewish Copy. *Eusebius* says that this Copy was writ in Hebrew Characters to distinguish it from other Copies of the Hebrew Text which were writ in Greek Characters, and the Hebrew Copy, which was in the *Hexaplas*'s of *Origen*, was writ after this manner in Greek Characters as all the world knows. To which may be added that *Origen*, for the understanding the Hebrew Tongue, had no commerce with the *Samaritans* but with the *Jews*. In fine, *Eusebius* distinguishes these two Texts in the beginning of his Chronicle by these words

words [*The Hebrew Text which the Jews make use of, and the Hebrew Text which the Samaritans use.*] and he placeth the Jewish Copy before the Samaritan. But we need not dwell any longer upon this passage of *Eusebius*, I onely wonder that so learned a man as *Vossius* has so strangely altered the sense.

In fine, as to the Samaritan Characters there remains a great difficulty concerning the Letter *Thau* which *S. Jerome* assures us was made in the figure of a Cross, which figure appears not in the Alphabet of the Samaritans at this time, and 'tis this which has made some people believe, that *S. Jerome* never read the Hebrew Copy writ in Samaritan Characters, but onely the Greek Samaritan Translation, and that he spoke but upon the credit of other men: 'tis true that in the Hebrew Samaritan Copies which have been brought from the *Levant*, the Letter *Thau* is not writ in manner of a Cross. Nevertheless *R. Azarias*, in the Samaritan Alphabet which he has caused to be printed in his Book, produces two figures of this Letter *Thau*, one of which is in form of a Cross. The ancient Medals or Moneys of the Hebrews confirm the same thing, and moreover *Jerom Alexander*, in a Letter which he writ to Father *Morin*, proves it by other ancient Moneys, and adds, that it is probable that the *Samaritans* to write faster have changed the ancient figure of the Cross, unto that of this day. This is by so much the more probable as that the Samaritan *Thau* as it is at present may be made with one dash of the Pen, which the ancient one could not be made by, which was in form of a *S. Andrew's* Cross, or a Greek X.

Many have confirm'd this opinion of *S. Jerom* touching the figure of the ancient Samaritan *Thau* by the passage of *Ezekiel*, which most of the Interpreters translate, [*mark a Thau upon the forehead of men*] but this *Thau*, according to the Testimony of some Fathers, was a Cross, and therefore the ancient *Thau* of the Hebrews was of that figure, but the Fathers, who have not understood the Letter *Thau* of the first Hebrews, have explain'd it of the Greek *Tau*, which comes very nigh the same figure, and without doubt was taken from the Phœnician *Thau*. But the words of the Prophet *Ezekiel* cannot be took after this manner, who spoke to the Hebrews not to the Greeks. Besides the passage of this Prophet may be simply translated [*and thou shalt make a sign*] or as it is word for word in the Hebrew Text [*thou*

*Hieron. com.*  
in cap. 9.  
*Ezek.*

*R. Azar.*  
*Imri Bina*  
cap. 56.

*Ezek. 9. 4.*

[*thou shalt mark a mark.*] There is no mention made of *Thau* unless it be that the Hebrew word signifies this Letter *Thau* and sign. The Septuagint have translated *put a sign* without mentioning a *Thau*, and it was not otherwise in the ancient vulgar Translation made from the Translation of the Septuagint. I know that a learned Protestant is of a contrary opinion, and he pretends to reform this place of the Septuagint Translation by the citation of some ancient Fathers. But there is a great deal of difference betwixt the Text of the Scriptures quoted by the Fathers to explain it, and betwixt the pure Text of the Scripture. It happens that sometimes they apply this Text to their sense, and it would be dangerous to reform the Copies upon their quotations if there were no other reasons to doe it. S. *Jerom* expressly observes that the Septuagint *Aquila* and *Symmachus* have translated it *sign* and not *Thau*. There is onely *Theodotion* who has translated it *Thau*. *Aquila* nevertheless has put *Thau* in another Translation, if the quotation of the Greek Scholiast on the Septuagint is true. However it be, nothing of moment can be concluded from the passage of *Ezekiel* unless we have recourse to some other means. The Jewish Doctours, speaking in the *Talmud* of the unction of the high Priests, assure us that they anointed them on the forehead in form of a Greek X, and this Greek X was in the shape of Saint *Andrew's* Cross, which is likewise the figure of the ancient Samaritan or Phœnician *Thau*. The *Jews* have likewise thought that in this place of *Ezekiel* the Letter *Thau* was understood, and that by this Letter, as S. *Jerome* with them has observ'd, the word *Torah* or *Law* was meant, which begins in Hebrew with the Letter *Thau*.

C H A P.

## C H A P. XIV.

*Of the Hebrew Tongue, whether it is the first Language of the world. After what manner Languages have been invented. Reconciliations of different opinions on this Subject.*

**A**fter having spoke of the first Hebrew Characters we shall now treat of the Language in which the Text of the Bible is writ, whence it draws its original, and whether *Adam* spoke this Language. The most common and approv'd opinion of the ancient Fathers, and which is likewise confirmed by many Rabbins, is that this Language is called *Hebrew* from a *Hebrew* word which signifies *from the other side*, that is to say, from the other side of *Euphrates*, as if this word onely denoted those who had passed this River. The Greek Translation of the Septuagint favours this interpretation. It is nevertheless much more probable that the Hebrew Language was so called from *Heber*, whence comes *Hibri*, after the same manner as *Israeli* comes from *Israel*, *Ishmaeli* from *Ishmael*. According to the other opinion we ought to have said *Hoher* or *Hoberi*. The analogy of Grammar will necessarily have this word *Hebrew* come from *Heber*, so this Language has been preserved in the Family of *Heber*. This opinion is likewise confirmed by the testimony of some learned Rab-  
bins. We ought nevertheless not to imagine that onely the posterity of *Abraham* spoke Hebrew, for the posterity of *Cham*, who possessed the Land of *Canaan*, spoke the same Language, as it is easie to prove from the holy Scripture. In the Prophecy of *Isaiab* the Hebrew Tongue is called the Language of *Canaan*, and the Septuagint translate in the History of *Joshua* these words [*the Kings of Canaan*] thus [*the Kings of Phœnicia or Palestine*] in effect the Canaanites are the same with the Phœnicians, and the Hebrew Tongue in which the holy Scriptures are writ is the same with the Phœnician, as *Bocartus* has very well observ'd in his Book intituled *Phaleg*.

It is much more difficult to know whether this Hebrew or Phœnician Tongue is the first of all Languages, mens opinions are

O

sufficient-

Cozri.  
Juharin.

sufficiently divided upon this point. The *Jews* pretend that the Hebrew is the first Tongue of the world and give several reasons for it. The *Syrians* likewise give this prerogative to the Chaldee or Syriack Tongue, and they prove it in that their Tongue seems not onely to be the most natural of all Tongues, but likewise because *Abraham* was a Chaldean, and likewise that in *Genesis* *Laban* speaks Chaldee or Syriack. On the other side the *Arabians* affirm that the Arabick was before all other Languages, and moreover the *Cophthes*, the *Æthiopians*, the *Armenians*, and some other Nations dispute for their Languages, as even some *Europeans*. Some Authours, and amongst others *Grotius*, have pretended that this first Language was lost, and will have *Moses* to have changed the ancient names, the etymology of which is set down in his Books in Hebrew ones. But the most received opinion among the *Christians* is that of the *Jews*, who affirm that Hebrew was *Adam's* Language, that this Tongue being more simple than the Chaldee or Syriack, the Arabick, and others which are Dialects of the Hebrew, is for this reason more ancient. To which one may answer that the simplicity of a Language is not always a certain proof of its antiquity, and that very often the Dialects of a Language are curtell'd, as it has happened in the different Dialects of the Italian, whose words are sometimes more abreviated in places where they speak it ill than in the pure Tuscan. There are for example some Italians who pronounce *Pan* and others *Pa* instead of *Pane*, it cannot be said for all that that *Pan* and *Pa* are more ancient than *Pane*, but that they have been abreviated. One may also say that the Syriack way of speaking appears more plain and natural than that of the Hebrews. The Hebrew of the Bible has likewise some ways of speaking not so plain and natural as the Arabick, whence might be proved that the Arabick is more ancient than the Hebrew. All these proofs therefore are onely conjectures from whence nothing of certainty can be concluded. If we say then that the names of *Adam*, *Eve* and *Seth* and several others are Hebrew, the *Arabians* and *Syrians* may likewise say they were taken from their Languages.

We ought not to accuse of novelty the opinion of those who pretend that the Language of *Adam* is lost and that we have no knowledge of it, since the same question has been treated on at large

large by *S. Gregory of Nisse* who decides it against the common opinion of the *Jews*. He says that persons learned in the study of the holy Scripture have affirmed that the Hebrew Tongue is not so ancient as many other Languages, but that this Tongue ought to be put among the several Miracles that were done in their favour when they went out of *Ægypt*. It is nevertheless much more probable that the Hebrews, being in the Land of *Goshen* separated from the *Ægyptians*, preserved the Language of their Father *Abraham* call'd *Hebrew*. The same *Gregory of Nisse* laughs at those who affirm that God was the Authour of the Language which *Adam* and *Eve* spoke, which he calls a folly and ridiculous vanity of the *Jews*. As if God (says he) had been a Grammar Schoolmaster who taught *Adam* a Language of his own invention. God, according to this Father, made the things but not the names, and men gave names to things after God had created them. God is not, says he, the Authour of the name of Heaven and Earth but the Authour of Heaven and Earth. Then he ascribes to reasonable Nature the invention of all Languages, God having given to men an understanding whereby to reason, which they have made use of to express their thoughts by inventing of words. In this sense the opinion of those ancient Philosophers ought to be explain'd, who have ascrib'd to Nature the invention of Languages.

Greg. Niss.  
Eunom.  
Orat. 12.

Lucret.

*At varios Lingua sonitus Natura subegit  
Mittere, & utilitas expressit nomina rerum.*

Which ought to be understood of the reasonable Nature, and thence the opinion of *Aristotle* may be reconciled with that of *Epicurus*. Nature and Reason are here the same thing, but as the reasons have not been the same in those who have invented Languages, we ought not to wonder at this great diversity which we find in different Languages. There is no Nation that does not believe but its Laws and customs are drawn from the principles of natural light and reason, and yet nevertheless most of the Laws and customs are different.

*Quid in hac mirabilo tantopere est re  
Si Genus humanum cui vox & Lingua vigeret  
Pro vario sensu varias res voce notaret.*

Lucret.

After the same manner may be explain'd what is in the *Chratyle* of *Plato*, where *Chratyle* pretends that some God is the Authour of Languages : He means not by this God any other Divinity but that of Reason, forasmuch as the Platonists express themselves often more like Divines than Philosophers, they meant no other thing by the Demon or God of *Socrates* than Reason.

*S. Gregory of Nisse*, whom we before spoke of, pusheth on his opinion yet further : he pretends that God was not the Authour of the confusion of Languages which happened at the building of the Tower of *Babel*. For, explaining in the same place in what sense the Scripture ascribes this confusion to God, he says that it is not to be found in the same Scripture that God has taught any Language to men, nor that men being divided into different Languages, that he ordain'd what Language every one should speak. But God who would that men should speak several Languages, permitted every one to explain himself after his own manner, according to the ordinary course of nature. And he adds moreover that this natural power of Reasoning which is in man comes from God, and that it is the true cause of this diversity of Tongues which is in several Nations.

— *Putare aliquem tum nomina distribuisse  
Rebus & inde homines didicisse vocabula prima  
Desipere est*

Lucret.

The same Father at the same time observes that whilest men lived together they spoke but one Language ; but God ordaining that they should separate one from the other, to the end they might inhabit the Earth, then this first Language was chang'd, and although they agreed in the knowledge of things they nevertheless named them severally, whence he infers that God is indeed the Authour of this confusion but not of the diversity of Tongues. This opinion may be confirmed by the Texts of Scripture which usually ascribe all things to God as if he was the sole Authour. *Josephus*, giving a reason of this manner of writing, says, that *Moses* begun not the Law as other Legislatours, in speaking of the justice which men ought to render one to another, but by the Creation of the World, to the end that the Creatour thereof might be known, and by this

Joseph. in  
pres. in  
lib. Antiq.

this means he made the people more docile to believe what he should tell them.

The same Historian commends the Patriarch *Abraham* in that he, having understood the Providence of God, made it known to others, and that he has related all things. According to this style *Moses* has very often had recourse to Divine Providence, and he is no less a Theologist than an Historian. Thus we ought with *Gregory of Nisse* to explain the confusion of Tongues, which we may attribute to God Theologically speaking, and at the same time to men according to the truth of the History ; this style is frequent in most places of the Bible. God says in *Exodus* that he will harden the heart of *Pharaoh*, and nevertheless it is said in the same place, that *Pharaoh* hardened his own heart. Let us now see more particularly after what manner the first Tongue was invented, and how by little and little it has swerv'd from its first original.

Lib. 4. Ant.

## C H A P. XV.

*The manner how Tongues have been invented more particularly explain'd. A Digression concerning the original of Languages.*

**D***iodorus Siculus* explains the invention of Languages after this manner. Men making their first attempts of speaking first of all pronounced insignificant sounds, then after they had us'd themselves a while to these sounds, they formed articulate ones to express their thoughts by. Reason corrected Nature and accommodated words to the signification of things.

Diod. Sic.  
lib. 2. Bib.  
Hist.

— *Si varii sensus animalia cogunt  
Multa tamen cum sint varias emittere voces.  
Quanto mortales magis equum est tam potuisse  
Dissimiles alia atque alia res voce notare ?*

Lucret.

The necessity which men had to speak one with another obliged them to find out words proportionably as they found out new things.

Utilitas expressit nomina rerum.

This *Ibid.*



This was the reason of inventing new words at the building of the famous Tower of *Babel*, and one ought not to wonder if there happened so much confusion, seeing there were so many things presented themselves which had not yet their names. Every one exprest them after his own way, and as nature ordinarily begins at what is most simple and where there is least composition, it is not to be doubted but that their first Language was the most simple and had no composition at all. All these qualities seem to concur better in the Hebrew Language than in any other. For the words of this Language have never in their original more than three Letters or two Syllables; and it is probable that in the beginning it had more monosyllables than it has at present. As for example, in the beginning it was said *had, one*, whereas now we say *A had*; the Grammarians, who have not seriously reflected on the original of Languages, pretend that *had* is an abbreviation of *A had*, whence the letter *A* has been taken, but they have not considered that the letter *A* is not so much a letter as a note of respiration, and that usually it has been added to words that they might be pronounc't with more easiness, and so for this reason is it call'd *litera anhelata*. The Arabick has added it in many words where it is not in the Hebrew, whence may be drawn a proof of the antiquity of this Language, which apparently seems to be the mother of the other oriental Languages. The Rabbins have done the same thing in regard to the Hebrew, Greek and other words which they have added after their own fashion to make the Rabbinical Hebrew. They have for example made of *Schola Eschola*, of *Stomachus Estomacha*. The Chaldeans and Syrians on the contrary have added this letter *A* to the end of their words, to make them end with more emphasis and gravity. And this is likewise a proof that these Languages are not so ancient as the Hebrew, because that nature is at first exprest as simply as possibly it can be, unless we say that the Hebrew has been abridg'd. Nevertheless if we diligently compare the Hebrew with other oriental Languages, we shall find that it has all the advantages of simplicity and antiquity above all the rest. I do not however believe that most words were so composed in the beginning as they are at present, but that art has by little and little join'd several letters for greater conveniency, as it is easie to evince.

There

There was nothing therefore more simple than the first Tongue, and *Salmatius* had reason to say that  $\chi\sigma\iota$  and  $\delta\omega$  in *Homer* are more ancient than  $\chi\sigma\iota\mu\omega\nu$  and  $\delta\omega\iota\omega$ . In the Hebrew *Gar* is more ancient than *Hagar*, which we use at present, and from whence the Latin word *grex* at present does come. So *grego* is more ancient than *aggrego*. This example and many others which may be brought, may prove that the letter *A* has been added to most words, rather to make them to be pronounced more gravely than really as a letter. The same thing we may say of the letter *S* which ordinarily is nothing but a hissing and not a true letter. Heretofore *Cab* was pronounc't in the Hebrew, whence is come *Cubo*, whereas we say now *Sacab* because the letter *S* has been added. The Chaldeans and Syrians have added this letter to several Hebrew words. The Latins have likewise added the same letter to the word  $\gamma\epsilon\sigma\omega$ , whence they have made *Scribo*, and the Græcian word  $\gamma\epsilon\sigma\omega$  comes from the old word *haraph*, which is much in use among the Arabians. The Oscan Language, although more ancient than the Latin, makes use of these sorts of hissings; instead of *Camenas* heretofore was said *Casmenas*; and the Latins like the letter *R* better, wherefore instead of *honor, odor* and *arbor* they write *honor, odor* and *arbor*. The *Osci* have borrowed these hissing letters from the Greeks and principally from the Doricks.

If all these additions of letters were considered which belong not in some sort to the body of the words; we might conclude that the Hebrew Language is more simple and ancient than any other Languages where these letters are. The Chaldee for example has added to the Hebrew words an *Aleph* to the end they may pronounce them with more gravity, and this *Aleph* is pronounced like an *A* by the Chaldæans of *Babylon*, and as an *O* by the Syrians, who are at this day of the Sect of the *Jacobites* and *Maronites*. From *O* the words ending in *A* and *O* amongst the Greeks and Latins are derived, then by adding the hissing letter the Greeks have form'd abundance of words in *os* and the Latins in *us*. It is the same with names ending in *as*. The Latins, who care not for the hissing letter have ended most of their words in *a* and *o*; the termination is likewise an addition to the simplicity of the first Tongues, and this is apparently the reason why the Hebrew Tongue contains fewer words ending

ending in *on* than the Arabick where they are very frequent.

The letters *N* and *M* derive their originals from those persons who delight to pronounce through the Nose; and although there is nothing for example more simple in the Hebrew than the word *Phe*, which contains but two letters; the Chaldæans have nevertheless made thereof *Phum* and *Phona* by adding the letter which is pronounc't through the Nose and the emphatical *Aleph*, whence the Greeks have afterwards borrowed *φωνή*, forasmuch as the Greeks have express't the Chaldæan *Aleph* sometimes by an *A* and sometimes by an *E*, and the letters *A* and *E* are sometimes in this Language chang'd one for another, which has produced different Dialects.

Those who have delighted in the letter *R*, which is ordinarily called *litera canina*, have added it to the end of words, and from thence come these terminations, *ar, er, ir, or, ur*.

One may therefore give reasons of all these terminations whether they be in *as, es, os, us*, or in *an, en, in, on, un*, or after any other manner. The Chaldee has first added a letter to the Hebrew, and afterwards the Greeks and Latins have added a letter to the Chaldee. There are nevertheless certain words among the Greeks which might immediately come from the Hebrew, without passing through the Chaldee, but that is rare. In a word; the Hebrew Tongue is more simple than the Arabick or Chaldee, and these two last are more simple than the Greek and Latin; so that if it be true that *Adam* spoke one of these Tongues without doubt it was Hebrew; provided we distinguish exactly the principal letters which compos'd every word in the beginning from those which have been since added, we may easily ascend to the first Tongue. For example, to express *Fire* or *Light* they said at first *Ur*, then an *Aleph* was added at the beginning of the word to pronounce it more softly, and that made *Aur*. Others have added the letter *N* and have pronounc't it *Nur*. The Greeks have put a labial letter at the beginning, whence they have made it *Pur*. If I did not fear being too long I would expatiate more largely on this matter, and shew by several examples after what manner Tongues that were very simple in their original have been by little and little augmented. But we shall content our selves in touching upon what is most profitable and necessary.

The letters which we have observed to be added, belong sometimes to the body of words, principally of such whose sound nature would express to the life. The letter *R* for example is in words which signifie to break, and after this manner the Hebrews use *Pharao* to signifie to break, from whence was derived the old Latin word *frago*, to which has been added the letter *n* to pronounce it through the Nose to make *frango*, although we say *fragmen fragilis*. Heretofore *Tago* was said instead of *Tango*, and the Greeks and Latins have from the Hebrew word *Lapid* made *Lampas*, the modern Greeks delight very much in adding these letters which are pronounced through the Nose. One may say the same thing of the letter *S* in words which signifie to hiss, and thus the Hebrews say *sarac*, the Greeks *σάραξω*, the Latins *sibilo*. The hissing letter is essential in all these words by reason of the signification which cannot better be express't than by this letter. It will be easie to reduce by this way most of the Greek and Latin words to their originals, by ascending to the Chaldee and from the Chaldee to the Hebrew. The Latin word *fagus*, which signifies the *food of the ancients*, comes from the Greek word *βήσω*, and its first original is the Hebrew monosyllable *bag*, to which the Chaldæans have added their emphatical *Aleph*, which has been pronounc't as *O*, and to the letter *o* the Greeks have added the hissing letter *s*. We may observe that the Hebrew *Beth* is pronounc't as *u* and *f*, and so instead of *bag* 'tis said *fag*, whence afterwards *fagos* and *fagus* have been derived. There are a great number of other letters which are chang'd one into another, and which are necessary to be known for the reducing of Languages to their first original. Thus *su* in Greek and *tu* in Latin are the same thing, and are derived from the Hebrew *ta*. The Doricks write *tu*. The Parthian and Persian words are for this very reason the same, which proceeds from certain letters softly pronounc't, which passing to other people are pronounc't more harshly, and then the Characters of these words are changed to accommodate them to the pronunciation. The Arabians have been obliged to multiply the first Characters of the Hebrews to express more perfectly the different changes of sounds. In fine, I could give reasons for all the Græcian Dialects, but that would carry me too far.

The Hebrew was not in the beginning after the manner it is at present. The words were less compound, and there were not all these Declensions of Nouns and Verbs, which are as well in the Hebrew as in other Languages: what nature at first invented was simple, but art afterwards joined several words to make Languages more easie. For example, in the Hebrew the Verbs and pronouns have been join'd together, and by this means Persons have been apply'd to Verbs, as of *pacad* has been made *pakadta* by adding *ta*, which signifieth *thou*; the same things have been done to the other Persons by adding *tem* and *ten*, whence has been made *pakadtem* and *pakadten* to denote the second Persons Plural, because *tem* and *ten* signifie *ye*. It is the same with the first Persons, this piece of art has past from the Hebrews, Chaldæans and Arabians to the Greeks and Latins. Several barbarous Languages have retained their ancient simplicity, for they generally exprest the Pronouns separately from the Verb, and we ought not to imagin that at the first the Græcians said *typto*, but in the beginning they said *typt* and *yo* separately, then by joining them together they made for shortness sake *typto*. In the second Person *tu* and *tu* was separately pronounc't at first, then by joining them together for a greater conveniency *tu* was made, as if in French instead of saying *tu frappes* we said in one word *frappetu*, one might then call this Termination of Verbs a Person, but Nature invented none of these sorts of inflections which ought all to be ascrib'd to Art. The Greek words ending in *mi*, furnisheth us with another example of this Art, for *mi* signified heretofore *me*, and for *mi* *did* has been said *didomi*, *I give*, or rather *I give me*. For the Pronoun of the first Person seems to be repeated twice in these sorts of Verbs.

Besides these changes, which are very ancient and before the rise of the Greek and Latin Tongues, the Grammarians introduc't others more new in the way of writing of Hebrew, and they cut off several Letters to render the pronunciation more easie. For example, the Preposition *in* being followed by a Vowel is not writ with all its letters, *in* is cut off for to join it with what follows, and this has been the cause of a great many Verbs which have been called defective by reason of some letters which have been taken away. For example, instead of writing *sinteten* we write at present *sitten*, as it is pronounc't.

nounc't. The Chaldæans have better preserv'd their ancient way of writing, and the Arabians likewise write not always as they pronounce.

This change which the *Jews* have introduc't into the Hebrew Text of the Bible, sometimes creates much confusion, because it is hard after these changes to reduce the words to their first roots, and to know what letters have been suppress't. It is necessary therefore to have recourse to the rules we have set down in the finding out the rise of Languages. But it is time to finish this Digression, which we thought convenient to be made, that the nature of the Hebrew Tongue, in which the holy Scriptures have been writ, might the better be understood, let us betake our selves therefore to our matter.

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## C H A P. XVI.

*The State of the Hebrew Text from the return out of Captivity to our Saviour. Of the Sect of the Sadducees. The Sadducees have received all the Bible. The Hebrew Copy of the Septuagint.*

WE have hitherto explain'd the several changes which have happened to the holy Scriptures from *Moses* to the return of the *Jews* from Captivity. Let us now see how they were during all the time of the second Temple to our Saviour. The Hebrew Tongue not being in use among the *Jews*, it was impossible that the Transcribers should write the Hebrew Copies with the same exactness they would have done, had the Hebrew been still their mother Tongue. Moreover the Chaldæan Tongue, which they then spoke, coming very nigh the Hebrew, gave the Translatours oftentimes occasion of putting one letter for another. I believe we ought chiefly to blame that time for good part of the confusion which we at present find in the Hebrew Text, which is very hard to be explain'd unless we have a perfect knowledge of all these changes. This is likewise the reason why the Septuagint differs from the new Translations of the Bible. The Hebrew Copies which the ancient

Interpreters made use of agree not always with those of this time, because the *Jews*, as we shall hereafter find, applying themselves to the study of Criticism, have reformed the Hebrew Text. To which we may add that the Doctours, who explained the holy Scriptures to the people, did not give themselves very much to render their Copies correct, guiding themselves rather by the Tradition of their Fathers than the Text of the Bible.

The Allegories past very freely among the *Jews* at their return from *Babylon*, and the Doctours took pleasure in inventing new senses of the Scripture, to render themselves of more esteem by their subtilties: which in sequel of time caused Divisions or Schismes, and at length a Sect arose which took the name of *Sadducees*, which oppos'd all new explanations, and cast aside all which was called Tradition. But as it ordinarily happens with novelties, the *Sadducees* push't their principle too far, and making profession of following nothing but the pure Text of Scripture, they deny'd the existence of spiritual things, which perhaps they believed was founded onely upon the Authority of the Doctours since the return from Captivity.

'Tis true the *Jews* have borrowed from the Chaldæans a great many allegorical Fictions, but they ought not for all that absolutely to have condemn'd all Traditions as they did. This Sect nevertheless kept the whole body of the Scripture, according to the Testimony of *Josephus*, who assures us that the *Sadducees* receiv'd *ἅπαντα τὰ γραμμένα*, all the Scripture, and that they rejected onely the Traditions. They therefore are deceived who believe that the *Sadducees* preserve onely the five Books of *Moses* in imitation of the *Samaritans*. There is a great deal of difference between one and the other, for when the *Samaritans* separated themselves from the body of the Republick, there were onely then the Books of the Law in use among the Hebrews, whereas in the time that the *Sadducees* sprung up the collection of the canonical Scriptures was received by all the *Jews* without any contradiction. The onely thing then in dispute was the Traditions and Explanations of the Doctours, and the party of these Doctours being the strongest among the *Jews*, was the cause that they troubled not themselves very much in having correct Copies, they applied themselves then onely to the nice explanations of the Text, and we see in the New Testa-

Testament that our Saviour blames the *Pharisees* for having corrupted the true sense of the Scripture with their subtilties.

We ought not therefore to wonder that the Hebrew Copies of the Scriptures have received many alterations made by Doctours who chiefly applied themselves to vain subtilties. The *Pharisees*, who succeeded these first allegorical Doctours, encreas'd much more these sorts of niceties, that they might more vigorously oppose the *Sadducees*. Our Saviour for all that has never reproach't them with corrupting the Text of the Bible, because that could not be called corruption which proceeded from their negligence. We might argue about those times as to what relates to the Hebrew Text, as we do about the latter ages in what relates to the Latin, commonly called the vulgar Translation. It is certain that, during the time wherein the study of Languages and Criticism has been neglected, the vulgar Translation has been fill'd with many faults, for this reason the Fathers of the Council of *Trent* order'd it should be corrected. *Lindanus*, examining the faults that were in the Latin *Psalter*, reproacheth the Church Canons with their ignorance, and that they heeded onely the singing part without troubling themselves with examining whether their Copies were correct or not.

The ancient Jewish Doctours relate many superstitious Sciences of the Chaldees, and amongst others the Visions of the *Cabbal*. They took pleasure in making Histories or rather Tales concerning the Angels, whose names and functions they exactly set down. These ridiculous subtilties are far from the study of Criticism, which was necessary for the preserving the Bible in its purity. The Transcribers, who understood not the Hebrew Tongue, writ many words according to their Chaldæan Orthography, some examples of which remain in the Text at present, although the *Jews* have reformed their Copies, we find many more examples in the old manuscripts of the Bible, where the last reformation of the *Masoret* or Jewish Criticks has not been exactly followed. And if we had more ancient Hebrew Copies this confusion would appear yet greater. We find several words cloth'd after the Chaldæan Dialect, which could not be so writ by the Authours of the Books where they are found. For example, in the 21st of *Ezekiel*, *Salbevet*, a Chaldee word

word is read instead of *Jahvet*, which is the same word in Hebrew.

In the Prophet *Isaiab*, who is a polite Writer, we find *Mauzin* in Chaldee instead of *Mauzin* which is the true Hebrew word; as the letter *Nun* is usual amongst the Chaldeans the Jewish Transcribers of those times have put it into the Hebrew words of the Text. Wherefore we yet read in the Copies at this day *Zarconin*, *Melacin*, *Millin*, for *Zeroim*, *Melacim*, *Millim*. There are many other examples of these changes whence may plainly be proved that the Transcribers have heretofore made many faults in writing the Hebrew Text occasioned by the Chaldean Tongue which was then in use.

I shall say nothing here of several other changes, as of *Aleph* into *Ain*, *Beth* into *Phe*, *Coph* into *Caph*, and *Schin* into *Samech*. The Transcribers have often confounded these letters, and therefore we ought not so much to consider how these words are at present writ as the connection of the sense. The Verb *Nasab* for example, whether it be writ with an *Aleph* or an *He*, with a *Samech* or a *Schin*, often signifies the same thing. The significations of the Verb *Kara* writ with an *He* and with an *Aleph* are very often confounded, wherefore an Interpreter of the holy Scripture, ought to be carefull and not so much to observe how the words are writ, as the sense which he shall judge to be the best. This confusion which is not onely in the ancient Vowels of the Text, but even in the Consonants, was much greater before the reformation of the *Massoret*, which we shall treat of hereafter. *Kova* with a *Coph* and *Cova* writ with a *Caph* are the same. *Soug* with a *Samech* and *Scoug* with a *Schin* signifie also alike. This difference of Orthography proceeds usually from Transcribers, and the Hebrew Tongue cannot be said to have preserved its ancient purity. All these different changes of letters ought to make us consider it as a Language composed at present of several Dialects.

To be clearly convinc'd of the changes which have happened to the holy Scriptures we need but cast our eyes upon the ancient Greek Septuagint Translation. There are in this Translation clear examples of several readings of their Hebrew Copies. I speak not here of the variety which proceeds from the different ways of translating, which I shall treat of in the Second Book, but onely of that which cannot be ascribed but to the

the variety of Hebrew Copies, as several Criticks have collected the best part of these various readings; We shall dwell no longer hereupon, it is sufficient onely to read the Commentaries of *S. Jerom* upon the Prophets, and some of his Epistles, where he very often produces the various readings. One may observe nevertheless that he does not justice to the Greek Interpreters, when he accuses them of having read the Hebrew Text otherwise then they ought, as if the Copies of his time had been the original Hebrew by which all other Copies ought to be regulated. He sometimes indeed is satisfied with saying [If ye read with such a letter you must translate thus, but if you read with another letter you must translate otherwise] he was then perswaded of the uncertainty of the Hebrew Text, in making reflection upon the Translation of the Septuagint, but when he would reform them by his Copy, which he calls *Hebraica Veritas*, he conforms himself wholly to the Copies of his own time, which ought not to prescribe us any rule, we ought then to examin all the various readings and stick to the best. *S. Jerom*, Jer. com. in cap. 17. 16. who often observes these sorts of varieties, is not so much perswaded of what he read in his own Copy but that sometimes he doubts whether it be the true reading. If we read, says he, the Hebrew word *Naamanim* with an *Ain* we must translate it *fair*, but if we read it with an *Aleph* we must translate it *faithfull*. He follows this last reading with the Septuagint, and at the same time observes that *Aquila Symmachus* and *Theodotion* have read it with an *Ain* as we read it in the Copies at this day. He nevertheless prefers the Septuagint before all others.

The same *S. Jerom*, in his Commentary upon the Book of *Wisdom*, testifies that the word which he translates *Raven* with the Septuagint was otherwise in the Hebrew Copy of his time, but that according to the varieties of reading one may translate it *Driness*, a *Knife*, or a *Raven*. *Bochartus* affirms that he understands not this observation of *S. Jerom*, since there is a great deal of difference betwixt *Oreb* writ with an *Ain* and an *Holem* which signifies *Raven*, and betwixt *Hereb* with an *Heth* which signifies *driness* or *Hereb* with the same *Heth* which signifies *Knife*. Boch. de fac. anim.

To answer this difficulty it will suffice to observe that *Saint Jerom* has not always been so carefull in following of his Hebrew Copy but that he has sometimes followed other readings, which were grounded upon the ancient Translations or upon the



the nature of the Hebrew Tongue. He look't upon the Hebrew Text as a writing very inconstant; and he took the liberty of changing one letter for another when he thought the sense might be made better. He ty'd up himself to no certain rule in his Translation, and is not always constant in his observations. For example, on the word *Deblata* in the 6th Chapter of *Ezekiel*, he says you may reade *Reblata* or *Deblata* because in the Hebrew the letters *Resh* and *Daleth* hardly differ one from the other. On the contrary, in the 20th Chapter of the same Prophet he takes up the Septuagint and accuses them for having confounded very improperly these two same letters because they resemble one another. S. *Jerom* then sometimes condemns the Septuagint by the Copies and sometimes he prefers their Copies before his own. But we have not time to enlarge any further upon the method which S. *Jerom* has observ'd in his Translation. What I have related has onely been to shew that the Hebrew Copies which the Septuagint made use of were different from his in many places. Moreover when he forsakes the reading of his Copies to follow that of the Septuagint or any other, he affirms there is nothing certain or constant in the reading the Hebrew Text. His way of translating, which has so little uniformity, is an evident sign that he had no certain rules, and that he rather had recourse to the sense than to what was writ. This variety of Copies can be onely attributed to the Transcribers chiefly before the Septuagint Translation where the study of Criticisme was wholly neglected. The *Jews* who lived long after them may have corrected these ancient Copies, but one has still the liberty of examining their corrections. The Hebrew Copy which the Septuagint made use of, ought not to be our rule, since at that time the Hebrew Text was much altered. We shall not therefore always correct the Text at present by the Copy of the Septuagint, because they have had no more than we the true Original, and their Copy of the Hebrew Text had likewise its failures as well as ours, and perhaps it was more defective in many places, because of the reasons we have already alledged. The Jewish Transcribers after their return from Captivity made many faults in writing out the sacred Copies, and as the Doctours then busied themselves onely in giving subtle Glosses on the Text; they took little care in examining whether the Copies were correct.

correct. Which has given occasion afterwards of establishing certain rules concerning letters which are put one for another, but most of these rules have no other foundation than old errors of Transcribers. We cannot for all that but acknowledge that there are in the Hebrew Tongue, as well as in others, some words alike, but that signifies not much seeing the *Jews* speak no more the Hebrew Tongue, the orthography has been changed, and the same word has been writ several ways, and as there was no Original to which one might have recourse as to a rule for the various readings, rules have been made to justify the liberty of putting one letter for another which was in the Hebrew Text. We shall examin hereafter the original of these various readings, when we shall speak of the ancient Manuscripts of the Text of the Bible, and of the *Massoret* or criticisme of the *Jews*.

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## C H A P. XVII.

*The state of the Hebrew Text at the time of our Saviour, and at the beginning of Christianity. Of Philo and Josephus. This last is not very exact. Christianity has made the Jews more carefull. Their Innovations.*

**T**HE *Jews* at the time of our Saviour apply'd themselves almost to nothing but their Traditions, Allegories and Parables. The literal sense of the Scripture was wholly neglected, and by consequence there was little care taken in getting correct Copies. The *Pharisees*, who were then the most considerable of all the Jewish Doctours, consulted not upon the difficulties which were in the Law, the Text of Scripture, but the Traditions of their Fathers: all was decided according to prejudice, and we find that our Saviour in the New Testament reproaches the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* in having rather followed the Traditions of their Fathers than the Law of *Moses*. 'Tis true that the Sect of the *Sadducees*, who rejected all Traditions, was likewise then very considerable, but they were more taken up in civil Affairs than in what related to Religion. And moreover this Sect lasted not long after

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after our Saviour. We are beholding to the *Pharisees* for the Copies of the Bible which we have at present; and the *Jews* at this day are the Successors of these ancient *Pharisees*, whose Doctrine has prevailed over all the other Sects. Moreover although our Saviour reprov'd the *Pharisees* for preferring Traditions before the word of God, he has not wholly rejected them, on the contrary he has follow'd their method in the explanation of the Scripture, and has onely blamed the use of ill-grounded Traditions.

S. *Paul*, who had been of the Sect of the *Pharisees*, has likewise interpreted Scripture according to the prejudices of Tradition, and the Church in the beginning seem'd even to prefer this manner of explaining the Bible, before that of some new Grammarians who onely regard the words; so likewise we do not find that our Saviour or the Apostles troubled themselves with quoting the passages of Scripture word for word; they have had more regard to the sense than to the letter of the Text. S. *Jerom* observes in his Commentaries upon the Prophet *Micah*, that some Writers of his time pretended that most of the passages of the Old Testament which are quoted in the New, were not exactly cited, but that the words or order were changed, and sometimes even the sense, because the Apostles or Evangelists trusted to their memory. It is more to the purpose to say that our Saviour and the Apostles quoted the passages of the Old Testament according to the method of the *Pharisees*, who related not the words of the Text when they quoted it, being perswaded that Religion depended more on the authority of Tradition than from the bare words of Scripture, which were subject to various interpretations. If we carefully examin the manner of the Apostles arguing in the New Testament, we shall be sufficiently convinc'd that they had regard in their citations to the sense onely and not to the rigour of Grammar, which sometimes is far from the true meaning. They accommodated the Testimonies they fetch'd from the Old Testament to the explanations received and authorized by Tradition, and their proofs are sometimes onely allusions and allegories, which we cannot blame them for, since they follow'd the method approv'd by the chief Doctours of that time.

We can however prove by the Books of *Philo* and *Josephus*, that Allegories were much in esteem among the *Jews* in the time of our Saviour, and that they heeded not much the literal sense of the Scripture,

Jerom.  
Micah.  
ch. 5.

Scripture or having exact Copies. *Philo* so much doted on Allegories that he sometimes neglects the truth of the History. I know that *Philo* may be said to be a *Hellenist* and *Platonick Jew*, and that being ignorant of the Hebrew Tongue he has had recourse to Allegories, but 'tis not the same with other *Jews*, chiefly those of *Jerusalem*, who taught in their Schools the Law of *Moses*, as it was writ in the Original. *Josephus*, who was a man very learned in the Hebrew, applied himself to the literal sense of the Scripture, and he has given us a good History which he has took from the Text of the Bible.

But this same History of *Josephus* is an evident proof that he esteem'd much more the allegorical than the literal explanation, as may be seen in the beginning of his Work, where he carefully enquires why *Moses* in expressing the first day of the Creation, made use of the word *a day*, and not of the *first*; he says that he could give reasons and that he would do it in a Volume to that purpose, where he will explain all the difficulties of the holy Scripture: but if he had followed the literal sense, he had had no need of any other explanation but simply of saying that the word which in Hebrew signifies *one* signifies likewise *first*. The same way of speaking is found in the Chaldæan or Syrian Language which was then spoke in *Jerusalem*. This Book which *Josephus* speaks of could contain nothing but allegories and subtilties, which were then generally approv'd of by all the *Jews*.

Many have believed that *Josephus* understood not well the Hebrew, and they prove it from his Books, where he seems not to be exact in the Etymologies which he gives of certain Hebrew Names; but they ought to consider there is difference betwixt the studies of our times and those which were in the times of *Josephus*: we regulate at present these Etymologies or explanations of words according to the exactness of Grammar, whereas *Josephus* heeded not so much how the words were writ as how they founded; and moreover he has often upon this Subject consulted the Syriack Language, which was then in use, and which comes very nigh the Hebrew. To which may be added that he likewise sometimes read the same names in Greek, without considering how they were writ in the original Hebrew. Wherefore a learned Protestant of our times troubles himself to no purpose to justify the etymologies of some Hebrew words which *Josephus* has in his History. We ought onely to suppose that *Josephus* minded

mind not so much the niceties of Grammar as we do at this present: this is so certain that even *S. Jerom*, who lived long after him, and who without doubt understood perfectly well the Hebrew Tongue, has likewise neglected them when he was to give any Etymologies. We ought not therefore to judge of *Josephus* his understanding in the Hebrew Tongue by these kind of Etymologies, else we may prove by the same reasons that *S. Jerom* hardly understood Hebrew. But what is more truly said of *Josephus* is that he is not exact. He promises to translate and to render simply the sense of the Scripture without adding or diminishing any thing, nevertheless he deviates from it very often, he adds glosses, he leaves out what he pleases, and adjusts the Text according to his fancy, or rather some Traditions of his time. In a word, he prefers his opinion and prejudice before the word of God, whence one may easily conclude they were not so faithfull at that time as to the holy Scriptures, as we are at present, since *Josephus*, who was a man of great quality among the *Jews*, and who had a solid Judgment, has been so little exact in a History where the simple narration of transactions, after the manner they were in their originals, was onely to be regarded. In the first Chapter of his History he says that God took away the use of speech from the Serpent, and made his Tongue become venomous, that he condemned him to have no feet, that God commanded *Adam* to tread upon the head of this Serpent, because from the head of this Animal proceeds all the evil of mankind: From hence we may see he has followed his own opinion and not the Text of Scripture. If we had the Commentaries upon the difficulties of the Bible which he promised, we should find pleasant explanations and delightfull fictions of the *Jews* of those times. I shall spend no more time in relating many examples of his glosses, because his History is publick to the world, and by comparing it with the Text of Scripture, one may find that this Authour has took a great deal of liberty.

'Tis true that the Books of the Bible are onely abreviated Collections from ancient Records which were more large; but particular persons are not for all that permitted to add upon their own authority, or change never so little. If a man so judicious and clear-sighted as *Josephus* was, has fallen into so great errors, and has had so little respect for the holy Text, we ought necessarily to conclude that the *Jews* of that time were less exact and faithfull

full in relation to the Books of the Bible, and that their greatest care was to stand to the traditions and glosses of their Fathers. In effect this great exactness which they have since had for the preserving the Text of the Scripture, has been occasioned by the Christians, with whom they have had great disputes concerning Religion. For then the *Jews* that they might be more enabled to destroy Christianity began to study with greater care the Text of the Bible. They examin'd the proofs which the Christians made use of against them, and they set up the Hebrew Copy against them as the original to which we ought to resort for the deciding of questions that were in debate.

These long and frequent disputes occasioned the *Jews* to search, with more diligence than before they had done, into the truth of the Septuagint Translation which the Christians made use of, and who would acknowledge no other Scripture but this Greek Translation. This Septuagint Translation had for some Ages been read in most of their Synagogues. The *Jews* made it equal almost to the original Hebrew, and ascrib'd it to Prophets inspir'd by God, and not to simple Interpreters. But as they saw the Christians rely'd wholly on this Translation, they cry'd it down, and what is very strange, the *Jews*, who had admired the Septuagint Translation as a Divine Work, look't upon it afterwards as an horrid piece and accursed by God. They feigned that the earth was covered with darkness for three days, because the Law had been translated into Greek, and they order'd a Fast once every year upon this occasion. They forbid the Law from being writ for the future in any other than the Hebrew Jewish Characters, and communicating the Hebrew Text to the Christians, nay even to teach them the Hebrew Tongue. All these Constitutions which are related in the *Talmud* were made in hatred to the Christians. *Josephus* understood not these Maxims, since one principal reason of his publishing his History was, as he himself testifies, the example of his Ancestours, from whom he had learnt not to conceal things that were good. *Philo* likewise speaks of the Septuagint Translation as of a Translation inspired by God, and affirms that, for the thanking of God for so great a mercy, there was once every year a Feast celebrated at *Alexandria*, in the place where it had been made.

So sudden a change of the *Jews*, and chiefly of those which were not *Hellenists*, could be ascrib'd to nothing but to the hatred they

they bore to the Christians; nevertheless the *Jews* which were called *Hellenists* left not off using the Septuagint, which makes me believe that they were onely the other *Jews* that opposed themselves so stily against the Greek Translation. *Josephus* nevertheless, who was one of the *Jews* who read the Bible in Hebrew, has no less veneration for the Septuagint Translation than *Philo* who was an *Hellenist Jew*. I believe that in our Saviours time there were in *Jerusalem* some Synagogues of *Hellenist Jews*, and amongst others that of the *Jews* of *Alexandria*, which the New Testament makes mention of, where it was permitted them to read the Law in Greek, and thus the great aversion of the *Jews* to the Septuagint Translation began not till they had had several disputes with the Christians, and it was at that time especially that the *Jews* apply'd themselves to the literal sense of the Scripture, and the rendring the Hebrew Copies as correct as they could. On the other side the Christians, who acknowledge no other Scripture than the Septuagint Translation, laid aside the Hebrew Text of the *Jews*, and accus'd them of having corrupted the Bible, seeing that the Hebrew agreed not altogether with the Septuagint. As we ought to do justice to the whole world, it is fit we should examin whether the accusations which the Fathers have charged the *Jews* with are well-grounded, and whether some learned men who reproach them at this day with the same crime have reason for so doing.

## C H A P. XVIII.

*The System of Father Morin and Vossius concerning the corruption of the Hebrew Text by the Jews. Explanation of the Opinion of the Fathers upon this point.*

**T**Here have always been learned men in the Church who have accus'd the *Jews* of wilfully corrupting the Text of the Scripture, to the end they might oppose Christianity more vigorously, but as this accusation consists in matter of fact, it is necessary we should examin the proofs there are to support this opinion.

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Father *Morin*, who produces the Testimony of the Fathers F. Mor. in  
exc. Bib. and many other Authours who are of this opinion, dares not declare himself to be of their mind, which certainly makes much for the *Jews*, forasmuch as Father *Morin* has done all he possibly could to diminish the Authority of the Hebrew Text, and to set up the Septuagint and vulgar Translations. *Vossius* has not voss. respected them so much in the Book he has writ to authorize the Septuagint, and at the same time to lessen the Authority of the Hebrew Jewish Copy. He is not contented to say that the Septuagint Translation is Divine and done by Prophets inspir'd by God, but says what possibly he can to cry down the present Hebrew Text. He pretends the *Jews* have maliciously corrupted their Copies, as well in the Chronology as in the Prophecies, and that no body should doubt of what he asserts, he observes the time of this corruption, which he says happen'd a little after the destruction of *Jerusalem*. He says that the *Jews* and *Samaritans* perceiving that the time in which their *Messias* was to come was already past, they abridg'd their Chronicle; and he further adds that they falsify'd the Prophecies, which he proves by the authority of the Fathers, and chiefly by the testimony of *Iustin Martyr*. But I can affirm, having read the Fathers themselves with attention; that most who have quoted them have not understood them. As to what regards the Chronology, I shall speak to that more at large in the Second Book, where I shall treat of the Chronology of the Septuagint, where we may see that *Vossius* has asserted a strange Paradox against the *Jews*, without grounding it upon any proofs.

The continual disputes which the primitive *Christians* were oblig'd to hold with the *Jews* concerning Religion, gave the ancient Fathers occasion of accusing them not onely of changing the true sense of the Bible, but of having falsify'd the holy Scriptures. As the Church in the beginning received no other Scripture but the Greek Septuagint Translation, it was almost natural for the first Fathers to accuse the *Jews* of having falsify'd the Scriptures, when they alledg'd one act, and the other denies what they cited out of the Scripture to be true; or when they were told that it was otherwise in the Original. This prejudice of the Fathers proceeded from their not acknowledging any other Scripture but the Greek Septuagint Translation, and from their not having throughly examin'd the matter. Wherefore when they affirm

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firm that the *Jews* have falsify'd the Scriptures, they mean as to the Greek Septuagint Translation, which the Fathers look'd upon as the onely rule of their Disputes : and the *Jews* refus'd to receive it, and set up other Greek Translations latelier made from the Hebrew. After this manner we ought to explain the words of *Justin Martyr*, in his Dialogue against *Tryphon the Jew*. *Justin* tells *Tryphon* that the *Jews* had no reason to deny that the Prophet *Isaiah* has foretold that *A Virgin should bring forth a Child*, and that instead of  $\mu\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\theta\omicron$ , which signifies *a Virgin*, they have put  $\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\varsigma$ , which alters the sense of the Prophecy ; it cannot be prov'd from thence that the *Jews* have corrupted the Scripture Text, but that they have translated a Hebrew word otherwise than the Septuagint. It is ordinary for persons in disputing to translate according to the sense they think most favours their opinion, the Text nevertheless remains the same, and the change is onely in the Translation.

We may moreover remark that the Fathers not understanding the Hebrew Text it self, call'd Hebrew, some new Greek Translations made from the Hebrew. *Justin* read the Translation of *Aquila*, which the *Jews* esteem'd, because it was word for word from the Hebrew, and when he saw this new Translation agreed not with the Septuagint, he accus'd the *Jews* of falsifying the Scripture, that is to say, of following a bad Interpretation, and not of corrupting the Text, which was not then the question. It is necessary then to examin the reasons which the Fathers alledge against the *Jews* when they accuse them of falsifying the Scriptures, and then we shall find that either they have not been well explain'd, or that they have not been rightly understood.

Leon Cast.

*Leon Castro*, a Spanish Doctour, has collected in a Book, which he has compos'd to justify the Septuagint and vulgar Translations, most of the Fathers Arguments, who accuse the *Jews* of falsifying the Scripture : but he may be answered that the opinion of the Fathers is of no authority in a matter which they were ignorant of. In effect *Justin* could not resolve this difficulty not understanding the Hebrew Tongue ; and in accusing the *Jews* of having falsify'd the Scriptures, it is not sufficient to say that there are many things in the Septuagint which are not in the Translation of *Aquila*, and consequently not in the Hebrew. Most of the Fathers acknowledge that the Septuagint have put into their Translation many things which were not in the Original,

ginal, and that they are very often Paraphrasers rather than Translatours : wherefore according to the Principle of the Fathers, who pretend that these additions have been inspir'd by God, we may easily defend the Septuagint without accusing the *Jews* of having left out any thing of the Scripture Text : to which we may add that *Justin* in that same Dialogue stretches a little too far the authority of the holy Scripture which he brings against the *Jews*. He is not satisfied with accusing them of having falsify'd the holy Scripture, because they cite it otherwise than it is in the Septuagint Translation ; but he sometimes quotes passages not as they are in the Septuagint, whether it is that he trusts too much to his memory, or that in quoting of them he heeds onely the sense ; which thing we ought to take notice of in the Fathers quotations out of the Scripture, for they are not always exact.

Moreover the Fathers might with reason accuse the *Jews* for refusing a Translation made by their ancient Doctours ; and which had been publickly read in their Synagogues, at least by the *Hellenist Jews* : they resorted to the new Greek Translations made from the Hebrew, onely for the better defending themselves from the Christians ; and those who understood the Hebrew Tongue consulted the Originals. We cannot however condemn them as falsifiers, since they have done nothing but what Disputants ordinarily doe ; and it is well known that upon these occasions every one resorts to the acts which favour most his party ; for example, we will not say that the Protestants have corrupted the Scripture, because they have laid aside the vulgar Translation, and abide onely by the Hebrew. If we will do the *Jews* justice we must say that finding themselves press'd by the authority of the Septuagint, they have laid aside that Translation and took the Original for their rule, which till then they had not observ'd with so much exactness, because there was no necessity for their so doing.

As for what *Vossius* adds to defend his opinion that *Justin* would have been laugh't at if he had urg'd any thing that was not true against *Tryphon*, no necessary consequence follows, for in reading the Dialogue of *Justin* against *Tryphon* we may plainly see that he has urg'd many things against the *Jews* which we can onely ascribe to the great zeal he had for the defence of the Christian Religion, he not being very exact in his quotations

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of the Scripture: the *Jews* of that time were so far from corrupting the Text of the Bible, that, the imputation seeming to be so great and incredible, *Tryphon* could not suffer *Justin* to reproach the *Jews* with it. If we reflect upon the Objections of *Justin* and some other Fathers, we shall find that they are grounded upon this Principle, that the Septuagint Translation onely is authentick and Divine, and that what is not conformable to it, has been corrupted. But as this Principle is not true, we ought to conclude that the consequences the Fathers have drawn from thence are likewise false.

After *Justin* the authority of *S. Irenaus* is alledg'd, who affirms that the *Jews* made a new Law contrary to that of *Moses*, wherein they have added or diminished as they thought fit. But *S. Irenaus* seems to speak there of the Constitutions of the Jewish Authours, who were so much wedded to the Traditions of their Fathers, that they made them equal with the Commandments of God, *miscent aquatam Traditionem Præcepto Dei*: and as to this he observes that in his time the *Jews* had a Law which was call'd the Law of the *Pharisees*: we ought moreover to take notice that by the word holy Scripture, *S. Irenaus* meant the Septuagint Translation, by which alone he guides himself in the confuting that of *Aquila's*, which the *Jews* made use of: he corrects indeed their false interpretations, but he accuses them not of having corrupted the Text; on the contrary he supposes they have not falsify'd the Scripture, because they did not foresee it would be so usefull for the Christians; and by the Scripture he means the Septuagint Translation; then he says that if they had foreseen it they would without doubt have burnt it. I understand not how Father *Morin* can prove from these last words of *Saint Irenaus*, that the *Jews* according to the opinion of this Father, have corrupted the holy Scriptures, since he seems to insinuate on the contrary, that they have not been Masters of them since the Christians have us'd them, and that it would have been to no purpose to have burnt them. In the third place *Tertullian* is quoted to shew that the *Jews* have corrupted the Scripture; but this ancient Doctor speaks not in the passage which is quoted, of the corruption here in question, he would onely have it that the Book which then went under *Enoch's* name has been added to the Canonical Scriptures; and to authorise yet further his Opinion, he says that the *Jews* have cut off from the Body of the Scripture many

*Iren. l. 4.  
cap. 25.*

*Tert. de  
Hab. Mul.  
c. 3.*

many places which spoke of the *Messias*, and from thence he answers what is objected against him, that the *Jews* had not kept the Book of *Enoch* amongst the collection of Canonical Books, *Scis*, says he, *Scripturam Enoch qua hunc ordinem Angelis dedit non recipi à quibusdam, nec in armarium Judaicum admittitur*. *Tertullian* in this place speaks of whole Books which he pretends have been suppress'd by the *Jews*, and not of some passages onely invented or alter'd, wherefore the consequences which Father *Morin* draws from this authority to prove that the *Jews* have corrupted the Scripture, are of no moment, since this place treats of another matter.

Moreover we are to observe that when the Fathers accuse the *Jews* of corrupting the Scripture, they mean not the Hebrew Text, but the Translation of *Aquila*, or *Symmachus*, and the *Theodoret* which they call the Scriptures of the *Hebrews*, because they had been made from the Hebrew to oppose the Septuagint. As the same Fathers were oblig'd to dispute against the *Jews*, they had recourse to these new Translations, that they might argue more strenuously against them out of their own Translations: *Justin Martyr* for this reason sometimes quotes the Translation of *Aquila* to encounter *Tryphon*. For this reason, as we shall hereafter see, *Origen* put all the Jewish Translations upon different Columns with the Septuagint, that in disputing against the *Jews* one might read them all together, and at the same time compare them with the Septuagint Translation, by which we ought to be guided.

Besides the Testimonies of these Fathers, Father *Morin* yet adds that of *Eusebius*, but what he relates is not so much *Eusebius's* as *Justin's*; for *Eusebius* in that place rests satisfied with barely relating the opinion of *Justin*, which he does as an Historian, without affirming any thing, and it is certain that *Eusebius* bore more respect to the Hebrew Copies which he often quotes in his Works. The authority of *Origen* and *S. Jerom* is much more to be esteem'd than that of all the other Fathers, because they understood the Hebrew Tongue, and chiefly *S. Jerom*, who made it his particular study amongst the *Jews* of his time.

Father *Morin* has cited some passages of *Origen*, who accuseth the *Jews* of corrupting the Scripture, and there are likewise some places in *S. Jerom* which accuse them of the same thing;

but we may at the same time observe, that there are other places in both these Fathers, which argue clear contrary. Those who consult in the Works of the Fathers those places onely which favour their opinions, cannot give a reason of this evident contradiction, and this we ought to examin with attention, that we may know what was the opinion of these two learned men concerning the Jewish Copies, and whether in effect they have prefer'd the Septuagint Translation before the original Hebrew.

## C H A P. XIX.

*The Opinion of Origen and S. Jerom concerning the Hebrew Text and the Septuagint Translation. The manner of these two Authours writing. The Jews have not corrupted the holy Scriptures. Conclusion. Several reflections.*

**I**T cannot be deny'd but that *Origen* has often accus'd the *Jews* of corrupting the holy Scripture, and that *S. Jerom* has also blam'd them upon the same account, but whosoever seriously considers the way of these two Fathers writing, will be convinc'd that they have often spoke against their opinions to suit them to other mens. *Origen*, in his Epistle dedicated to *Africanus*, accuses the *Jews* of having suppress'd many things which they had no mind should be placed amongst the collection of the holy Scriptures, or be made publick: this principle in general seems to be true, and he may have taken it from the *Jews*, and has well apply'd it in this Epistle to demonstrate the authority of the Books not contain'd in the Jewish Canon: but when he stretches it so far as to affirm that the *Jews* have designedly, and out of malice suppress'd many Writings, he goes too far with his conjectures in complying with the common opinion. So likewise he is not always of this opinion, forasmuch as sometimes, in his Commentaries upon the Prophets, he condemns the *Jews* as forgers of falsities, and sometimes he defends them from the injustice which is done them in being accus'd of this crime. *S. Jerom* himself, when he undertakes the protection of the

of the *Jews* makes use of *Origen's* authority, who has writ in his Commentaries upon *Isaiab* that if the *Jews* had corrupted the holy Scriptures, our Saviour and the Apostles would not have fail'd to blame both the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* for it: he laughs at the simplicity of those who are of this opinion, and asks them how it could possibly be, that our Saviour and his Apostles should take some passages out of the Scripture to make them agree with them which the *Jews* had falsify'd? *Origen*, in that place, absolutely denies that the *Jews* have designedly corrupted any passage of the Scripture, and *S. Jerom* is of his opinion.

When *Origen* writ on the contrary side he has conform'd himself to the common opinion, and if we take not notice of this way of writing, which is usual with him; we shall find him contradict himself in many places. He shews in his Book against *Celsus* what his method is, for having quoted some words of the Scripture according to the Septuagint Translation, which was generally approv'd of throughout the whole Church, he afterwards sets down the same words according to the Hebrew, then at the same time adds, by way of correction, that that was too abstruse and above the capacity of the people; for this very reason, without doubt it is that, in his Epistle to *Africanus*, he prefers the Septuagint Translation before all others, and that he owns himself to be far from putting any other Translation in its stead, and that we ought to keep what is already received, for fear of giving our enemies occasion of blaming us. He seems to reject the authority of the Hebrew Text, or rather the new Translations made from that Text, onely upon a prudent and politick account, fearing to create scandal in the Church, by diminishing the authority of a Translation which was look'd upon by all as a Work inspir'd by God.

*S. Jerom*, who us'd not so much caution, has observ'd that *Origen*, in his Homilies which he read to the people, follow'd exactly the common Translation, but in his Tomes or great disputes he had recourse to the Hebrew Tongue; he discourf'd not therefore with learned men as he did with the people. *Eustachius*, in a Discourse which he has writ against *Origen*, accuses him of often being of different opinions; and this is so true that *S. Jerom*, who likewise is blam'd upon the same account, defends himself by the example of other Fathers (and chiefly by *Origen*) who said not always in their disputes what they thought, but what they

they judg'd most to the purpose, *quia interdum coguntur loqui, non quod sentiunt, sed quod necesse est dicunt.* By this principle the different passages of *Origen* may be explain'd, where he seems to contradict himself in speaking of the *Jews*.

As for *S. Jerom*, 'tis known with what ardour he has defended the Hebrew Text against the Septuagint Translation. To authorise this Text he calls it in several places *Veritas Hebraica*, and he often speaks of the Septuagint in a very injurious manner. If he accuses therefore sometimes the *Jews* of having corrupted the Hebrew Copies, he conforms himself then to the common opinion of other Writers, whereas when he freely expresses his mind he severely reproveth those who dare to accuse the *Jews* of having corrupted the Scriptures, and he justifies his manner of writing in many places of his Works. *Ruffinus* and others have found fault with him for the different opinions which are in his Books, and as he could not deny a thing so plain, he answers them that they understood not the Laws of Logick, that they were ignorant how in disputes sometimes one talks in this manner and sometimes in that, sometimes on this side and sometimes on the contrary. He farther adds, there are certain reasons why one may talk differently upon the same things and persons; in effect *S. Jerom* seems sometimes to be a *Jew*, speaking altogether like them; and then if his words agree not with the opinion of the Church, they are to be explain'd according to the rules which he himself has set down in his Works, where he says there is a great deal of difference betwixt one who simply relates what he has read in other Authours, and one who affirms a thing himself. In this sense he places some Books, which the Church has receiv'd for Canonical, amongst Apocryphal ones, and denies *Daniel* to be a Prophet. In those places he relates, according to his usual method, the opinion of the *Jews*, and not what he thought himself.

When *S. Jerom* accuses the *Jews* of have corrupted the Scriptures, he speaks after the manner of other Fathers, whose Works sometimes he onely copy'd, as he himself owns, without naming the Authours, and without distinguishing what was his own from what he took from others; so that to understand truly his opinion, it was necessary to have read the same Authours he had, which he sometimes makes mention of in his Prefaces to justify his method: he grounds it upon the authority of many Writers, and

and quotes *S. Paul* whom as one of them he has imitated in this manner of writing; he pretends that this holy Apostle has us'd a great deal of prudence and skill in his Epistles to the Romans, the Galatians, and to the Ephesians, when he quotes any thing out of the Old Testament, *Legite Epistolas ejus ad Romanos, ad Galatas, ad Ephesios in quibus totus in certamine positus est, & videbitis eum in testimoniis qua habet de veteri Testamento, quam prudens quam dissimulator sit ejus quod agit.*

If *Vossius* had consider'd this method of *S. Jerom's*, he would not so readily have quoted him to prove that this Father could not deny, but that the *Jews* had took out of their Hebrew Copies the word *Euphrata*, which signifies *Bethlehem*, that our Saviour might not appear to be of the Tribe of *Judah*. *S. Jerom*, who handles this question in his Commentaries upon the Prophet *Micha*, has not decided it, relating onely, according to his usual custom, the different opinions on this point. He says in the History of *Joshua*, according to the Septuagint Translation, there is mention made of eleven Cities, amongst which is *Euphrata* or *Bethlehem*, but it is not spoke of in the Hebrew or in any other Interpreter; Then he adds that he dares not say whether this has been left out in the ancient Copies through the malice of the *Jews*, or whether it has been added by the Septuagint. *S. Jerom* relates the two opinions of his time, and declares he dares not give his own thereupon: but it is easie to judge by what he says elsewhere what his opinion was, where he affirms that the *Jews* have not corrupted the holy Scriptures. In the Commentaries he ordinarily does but relate what he has read in other Authours, as he acknowledges in many places of his Works.

Neither has Father *Morin* done *S. Jerom* justice, when he charges him so highly with inconstancy; he says that this Father being young commended the Septuagint Translation which he confess'd had been compos'd by Prophets, and in that time he accus'd the *Jews* of maliciously corrupting the Scriptures, by reason of the hatred they bore the Christians; but being grown older, and having frequented the company of the *Jews*, he chang'd his opinion, and that he was extracmly byass'd against the Septuagint. *Ruffinus* heretofore reproach'd *S. Jerom* with many things of the like nature, to which he answer'd, and shew'd that he always had in his age been of the same opinion he was in his youth: *Tam stultus, says he, eram ut quod in pueritia didici, se-*

*nex oblivisci vellem.* We shall have occasion again of speaking of S. *Jerom's* method, when we shall examin the Septuagint and his Translations, 'tis sufficient here to have observ'd that he conforms himself often to the common opinions, although he is of another judgment, as *Ribera* the *Jesuite* has judiciously observ'd, in his Commentaries upon the third Chapter of the Prophet *Joel*.

We shall spend no more time in examining whether it was possible for the *Jews* to corrupt their Copies, without being found out, since the question is about a matter of fact; it suffices that we have shewn that there are no evident proofs that they have done it, and this shall more particularly be made appear in the Second Book. S. *Augustin* has occasion'd this question, because he pretends that the *Jews* have not onely abstain'd from corrupting of the Scriptures, but it was impossible that they should think of doing it: when he meets with any thing in the Septuagint, which is otherwise in the Hebrew, he accuses not the *Jews* of having chang'd the Text, although he believes, as well as the rest of the Fathers, that the Septuagint had been made by Prophets; but he has recourse to the providence of God, who permitted these Interpreters to translate the holy Scriptures as he thought most fit for the *Gentiles*, who were to embrace the Christian Religion. This holy Doctour defends by this means the Septuagint Translation, and at the same time preserves the authority of the Hebrew Text, which he sometimes prefers before this Translation; as when he examines whether in the Prophet *Jonas* we ought to read *three days*, as it is in the Hebrew Text, or *forty days*, as it is in the Septuagint; he is of opinion that we ought to follow the Hebrew in that place, and in other places he also declares in favour of the Hebrew Text. It is not proper here to examin whether his principle be true or no. It is sufficient that, although he was much prejudic'd for the Septuagint Translation, he has nevertheless done the *Jews* justice against the common opinion of the other Fathers.

Moreover we are to conclude that the *Jews*, finding themselves oblig'd continually to dispute with the Christians, observ'd more exactly than before they had done the literal sense of the Scripture, and that they had recourse to the original Hebrew, or rather to the new Translations from the Hebrew. As they perceiv'd the Septuagint to deviate very often from the Text which they

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they translated, they took the greater care to render it word for word. Although the Cabbalistic and Allegorical fictions were in great esteem amongst them, they nevertheless thought it necessary to follow the literal sense of the Scripture, the better to encounter the Christians. The reasons of *Tryphon* the *Jew* against *Justin* sufficiently shew that the *Jews* of that time neglected not the study of the Bible. They made a Criticisme upon the Septuagint Translation, and finding it in many places not to agree with the Original, they put in others more literal in its place, without nevertheless meddling with the Hebrew Text, which they have always left untouch'd. If they had corrupted their Copies they would have left out several passages which make against them, and even some Prophecies, which they cannot make sense of. Wherefore we ought to think that the *Jews* have not maliciously corrupted their Copies. But on the other side, it is but a fancy and vain superstition to think that the Copies have never vary'd, and to reconcile all the differences by the present Text.

To speak of these various readings without partiality, we ought to examin, according to the ordinary rules of Criticisme, all the Translations, which were made at the beginning of Christianity. We shall find in the fragments which are come down to us, that the Hebrew Copies from whence they have been made, differ less from ours than from those of the Septuagint. Which without doubt proceeds from their Translations being more restrain'd than that of the Septuagint. Moreover the *Jews* at that time began to apply themselves to the Criticisme of the Scripture, and to the refining of their Language more than they had before done; these ancient Interpreters nevertheless, who were enemies to our Religion, may have limited their Translations in favour of their prejudices, but for all that they have never meddled with the Text; and the genius of the Hebrew Tongue, whose words most of them are equivocal, seems to have given them this liberty. The Fathers, who could not judge of the fidelity of their Translations, extremely condemn'd them, because the Church, to whom the possession of the true Scripture belong'd, acknowledg'd no other but the Greek Septuagint Translation. Nevertheless this variety of Translations has wrought no change in the Hebrew Text, otherwise we might likewise accuse S. *Jerom* of having corrupted the Text, seeing

his Translation is so different from that of the Septuagint.

As for the ancient Interpreters we ought not to be byass'd in favour of them as if their Hebrew Copies were better onely because they are more ancient. Antiquity ought not to be so much regarded in this affair, since it is certain that the most ancient Translations of all were not made till long after the Originals were lost, and that the Hebrew was no more in use amongst the *Jews*. The manuscript Copies of the vulgar Translation are not more exact because they are more ancient, on the contrary they are more correct since the Criticks have review'd them, and they may yet be corrected in many places.

It may be then that the *Jews* having carefully sought after the literal sense of the Scripture, for to fortifie themselves against the *Christians*, have made their Copies more correct than they were before. On the contrary it may likewise happen that they have sometimes corrected them very improperly; and for this reason it is necessary carefully to examin all the various readings of the Hebrew Text, which the ancient Interpreters can furnish us withall, and then we may judge according to the rules of Criticism, without having too much respect to Antiquity, which are the best and deserve to be prefer'd. But for the discerning of this there is requir'd a perfect knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue, far different from what we attain to by the help of new Grammars and Dictionaries.

## CHAP. XX.

*The state of the Hebrew Text for the first Centuries. Various readings of the Scripture in the Talmud.*

**T**HE ignorance of the *Jews* was so great as to their ancient Histories, that we have nothing at present in their Books whence we may know what their Doctours chiefly apply'd themselves to after the ruine of their Temple. They have indeed some Catalogues where are describ'd the Succession of their Leaders, their Schools, and those who have govern'd them, but besides

sides that these Catalogues are very uncertain, there is nothing remarkable in them, their chief design was to instruct the people in the Religion of their Fathers, by preserving of Tradition, and we find not that they minded the refining of the Hebrew Tongue, or the perfecting of their Copies.

Nevertheless their disputes with the primitive Christians shew us that they did not so much follow their Traditions as wholly to neglect the literal sense of the Scripture. *Origen*, *Eusebius*, *S. Epiphanius*, *S. Jerom*, *S. Chrysostom*, *Theodoret* and some other Fathers who have lived amongst them, blam'd them for keeping too close to the letter; and *Theodorus* of *Mopsuesta* was condemn'd, in a general Council, for having explain'd the Prophets altogether historically, and according to the method of the *Jews* of that time. Although the Hebrew Tongue was not then taught according to the rules of Art, and the Grammar was not yet invented, they had nevertheless a certain receiv'd method, as well for the explanation of the words as for the reading of the Text. *Origen* plac'd in his *Hexaplast's* the Hebrew Text in Greek Characters, as it was then read; and thus Custom was the standing Rule, and this has afterwards been observ'd, by the help of pointed Vowels which have wholly fix't the reading of the Hebrew. The Hebrew Tongue was taught by the Doctours in the Schools. *S. Epiphanius* and *S. Jerom* mention a famous University at *Tiberias*, whence the latter had his Masters come to instruct him in the holy Language, and we find many other Jewish Universities or Schools, spoke of in the Books of the Rabbins.

Custom nevertheless had not so fix't the reading of the Hebrew Text, but that one might doubt of some words, when there arose any question about their meaning, and it was impossible it should be otherwise, if we consider the nature of the Hebrew Tongue, which in this has been always like other Oriental Languages, which have permitted Transcribers to add or diminish certain letters, which were instead of Vowels before points were invented. From hence came most of the various readings, and afterwards the difference of Translations; and as these Vowels are sometimes essential to the Hebrew words, and sometimes added, if there be not rules to shew certainly when they are to be, the sense will remain imperfect.

Moreover these same Vowels distinguish the Genders, Tenses, Numbers and several other things, and therefore it is impossible



to know the true sense of the words without knowing the manner of their being writ. Now in those times before the pointed Vowels were invented, every Transcriber suppress'd or added letter Vowels according to his own fancy. Custom had not so fix'd the reading or rather manner of writing of the Hebrew words, but that these Transcribers yet took the same liberty. We find examples in the Commentaries of S. Jerom, for the Jewish Doctour, who taught him, doubts sometimes of the reading of certain words, or at least makes no scruple of changing it to find out a better sense.

The ancient Jewish Doctours in the *Talmud* furnish us likewise with some examples of these various readings, which R. Jacob Hayim mentions in his Preface to the collection of the *Massoret*, but most of the examples he instances in consist in the Vowels we have already spoke of. We shall not spend time in relating them one by one, because it is sufficient, having observ'd the rise, from thence to conclude, that since the Originals of the Hebrew Text have been lost, it is impossible but that there should be a great many of these variations. The Jews, who are persuaded of this truth, pretend they ought all to be reformed by a Criticism they have made upon the Text, and have call'd it the *Massoret*. Several Christians have followed this opinion of the Jews as to the *Massoret*. But not to confound our History, we will treat of this *Massoret* hereafter, when we will examin it very thoroughly.

*Buxtorf* the Son, who has defended, as much as in him lay, the integrity of the present Hebrew Text, has made no scruple to acknowledge that there are various readings in the *Talmud*, and that the *Ghemara* agrees not always with the *Massoret* in this point; but at the same time he pretends that these various readings are not considerable, because most of them consist onely in the letters *Vau* and *Jod*; besides the Rabbins correct all these various readings by the *Massoret*. He moreover adds, that most of the varieties mention'd in the *Talmud* are not real, but onely Allegories and pleasant quirks, which have no relation to Criticism. Mr. Chaplain, who has examin'd more particularly this question, agrees not with *Buxtorf*, that these various readings of the *Talmud*, mention'd in the Preface of R. Jacob Hayim, are of no consideration, especially that which observes in one place that *Sampson* was Judge 20 years. He cannot admit of the interpretation-

*Buxtorf.*  
*Aniq. lib. 2.*  
c. 12.

Chap. in  
Mar. Rabb.

terpretation of some Jews, who reconcile these two places of the *Talmud* which seem to contradict one another, by a *Deras* or allegorical Explanation. He likewise rejects the opinion of R. David Kimhi, who thought that this pretended contradiction ought to be ascrib'd to a repetition of the same words of the Scripture, where it is twice said that *Sampson* was Judge 20 years, so that the *Talmudists* took occasion to say that he was Judge 40 years, to the end they might make an Allegory. But it is not necessary to produce many of these examples of the various readings of the *Talmud*, since all the world agrees that the way onely of explaining them is disputed.

It is necessary then first to suppose as a certain truth, that most of the various readings in the *Talmud* have no other foundation than the imagination of some Doctours who delighted in Allegories, which they themselves shew, when they say, *Read not thus, but thus*. They moreover use the word *Deras*, which signifies an allegorical interpretation, and not a true diversity of reading. Thus we ought to understand what is observ'd in the *Ghemara* of the Treatise *Sanhedrim*, where *Rabba* notes that in the 3d Chapter of the 2d Book of *Kings*, and the 25th Verse, where it is in the Text the *Haverot*, it ought to be read the *Hacerot*; it seems nevertheless to be a various reading grounded upon the resemblance of the letters *Beih* and *Caph*. And R. David Kimhi observes in his Commentary upon this passage, that those Doctours and the Grammarians, R. Menahem, R. Juda and some others have mentioned this various reading, but that he has neither found it in the *Massoret*, nor in the correct Copies, and that R. Jona is of his opinion; so that the Rabbins were divided about the varieties of the Scripture, which the *Talmud* makes mention of, and therefore it is likely that the word *Deras* does not always signify an allegorical explanation.

In the second place we are to suppose that the *Talmud* agrees not always with the *Massoret* in the manner of writing the Hebrew words, when the differences arise from the letters call'd *Evi*, or the ancient Vowels *Aleph*, *Vau* and *Jod*, because their Transcribers have took the liberty of adding or leaving out these letters; which has not been done to the Books of the *Talmud* onely, and then we are to follow the plurality of Copies, as the Jewish Doctours observe in the Treatise *Sopherin*. In a word, we are to apply the same rules of Criticism to the various readings

readings of the Scripture, whether they are in the *Talmud*, or in other places, which have commonly been apply'd to all other Books.

Thirdly, We ought to take care not to multiply too slightly the various readings of the Scripture, upon the authority onely of the *Talmud* and some other ancient allegorical Books; for that besides that the Doctours of the *Ghemara* or *Talmud* are not very exact in their quotations, the Authour of the Book call'd *Halicot Olam* affirms that they often abridge the Scripture as they think fit, and that they relate not faithfully the words of the Text. Moreover they are so ignorant that the other *Jews* are sometimes forc't to quit them, because they find them contrary to the Scriptures. It is certain that the Doctours apply'd themselves onely to what concern'd the Commands or Prohibitions of the Law, and that they neglected the rest, having no knowledge in Criticism, but even despising that study. Wherefore their Chronology is so uncertain, and sometimes contrary to the Text of the Bible, as it would be easie to shew by many examples, which have been observ'd by R. *Azarias*, *Abrauanel* and some other learned Rabbins. But that would carry us too far, it suffices to have said in general that there is a great deal of ignorance in the *Ghemara* or *Talmud*.

Although the Jewish Doctours in the *Talmud* generally minded nothing but trifles, we have nevertheless sometimes some marks of their exactness in the writing out of their Copies; but this exactness ought not to be as a rule, since they wanted true Originals, by which they might justify those readings they preferr'd before others. They can onely be grounded upon a certain Custom or Tradition of reading one way rather than another, and this Custom ought not indeed wholly to be laid aside; but it would be difficult to prove that there has been a constant Custom preserv'd of what onely depends upon the fancy of Transcribers. Tradition cannot be an infallible rule in these sort of varieties, especially when they proceed from the Genius of a Language, and this Language has not been preserv'd by a continual Custom.

R. *Jacob*, usually call'd *Baal Haurim*, observes that in the time of the Doctours of the *Talmud*, the Text of the Law was paraphras'd into the Tongue which the people understood, and that the Reader could onely read one Verse of the Text, and  
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Halicot. Ol.  
c. 2.

at the same time he had the Paraphrase of it given him, and afterwards he went to another Verse, which the Paraphraser could not interpret till he had read it out. This method of reading distinctly the Text of the Scripture, might in some sort preserve a certain custom or tradition of reading amongst the *Jews*, till it was fix't by pointed Vowels, as it afterwards was by the *Massorets*. This manner likewise of explaining the words of the Hebrew Text in a Language understood by the people, has hindred the Hebrew Tongue from being wholly lost; especially, if they have constantly observ'd this method since their return from *Babylon*; but on the contrary, the disputes which Doctours have had amongst themselves concerning the reading of some words, perswade us that they had no constant Tradition in this point. And moreover the different opinions of the *Jews* concerning the explanations of many words, sufficiently demonstrate the knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue not to have been entirely preserv'd.

It is true that the varieties of the Hebrew Text at this day in the *Talmud* are not very many, nor very considerable; but it is probable that those who caused the *Talmud* to be printed, have corrected the passages of the Scripture by the present *Massoret* Copies, which they take to be the rule for all the various readings, by comparing many Hebrew Manuscripts upon different Subjects. I have found most of them alike, so certain it is that the *Jews* have not been very faithfull in copying of their Books. And moreover those who have took care in printing of them have publish'd the Copies which they thought were the best, very often without observing the various readings. If we would therefore properly judge of the varieties of the Scriptures which are in the *Talmud*, it would be necessary to have some old Manuscripts of this Book which had not been reform'd. There were anciently two Editions or different publications of the *Talmud* from different Copies, as is observ'd in the Book intitled *Jubatin*. We ought not therefore to wonder that the *Jews* have reform'd the quotations of the Scripture by the new Copies of the *Massoret*, since they were perswaded that what is not conformable to it is not correct; besides that they have corrected most of their other Books after the same manner.

To conclude, it is necessary to observe that the different readings of the Hebrew Text which we find in the *Talmud* are most  
of them

of them but Allegories or subtle quirks, and when the Talmudists say, *Reade not thus, but thus*, they consider not the variety of the Hebrew Copies, but go according to their own imagination, which was fertile in inventing new ways of reading for to make the sense altogether new. It is not necessary for us to dwell any longer upon the fictions of these allegorical Doctours. Those who would take the pains to compare the passages of the Scripture quoted in the *Talmud* with the Copies of these times, may make use of a little Book printed under the name of *Sepher Foldot Aaron*, where these passages are mark't out with the places of the *Talmud* where they are to be found. This seems to me to be no necessary Work, no more than the examining of the ancient Jewish allegorical Books. For example, the *Zohar*, the *Basir*, the *Medrasim* and the *Rabbot*, which are Commentaries upon the Scripture, full of Allegorical and Cabbalistic Fictions; for besides that in these Works very few of the various readings are true, we find in them nothing but subtillies which have no foundation, 'tis more proper to enquire for the truth in good manuscript Copies and Authours.

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 C H A P. XXI.

*Manuscript Copies of the Hebrew Text. The difference of Manuscripts us'd in the Synagogues, and those us'd onely by private persons. Which are the best Manuscripts of the Bible.*

There is hardly any one who cannot collect the various readings in the printed Hebrew Bibles, but there are very few who have all the necessary helps requir'd for the consulting of the old Manuscripts, which are very scarce, and therefore we ought to have seen several to give a sound judgment thereupon. *Ludovicus Capellus*, who has collected the varieties of some printed Bibles into a Criticism, complains that it is very hard to recover old Manuscripts of the Hebrew Text of the Bible, and that those who have them will not freely communicate them.

Father

Father *Morin*, who had a Library well stor'd with these sorts of Books, has made use of them but in two or three places, and there even with a great deal of negligence. I will endeavour to supply the failures of these two Authours, without partaking of their prejudices. I think it not necessary to place amongst the various readings many trifles as they have done, which are manifest errors of Transcribers, which may easily be amended by good Copies. It will be more necessary to observe the rise of all the various readings, to the end that we may give a reason of the different interpretations.

The *Jews* have two sorts of manuscript Copies of the Bible, one of which, serving for the ordinary use of the Synagogue, is writ in certain Scrolls or Parchments with great exactness. The other, which particular persons copy out for their own use, differs not from our Manuscripts. The first contains onely the five Books of the Law, and some little Volumes which are read in the Synagogues, and is writ in separate Scrolls; the other contains the whole Text of the Scripture, which is divided into four and twenty Books: There is some difference in the writing of these two Copies, and there is more care taken in the writing of the first than of that which is onely for private persons. Nevertheless most of the precautions us'd are superstitious, and the invention of the Rabbins; Therefore my design is not to mark them all particularly, for fear of being tedious; it will be enough to touch upon some of the principal ones without counting the others.

First, The Characters of these Manuscripts, which are us'd in the Synagogues, are not altogether the same with those which are in the common Copies. There are certain letters in these Manuscripts of the Synagogue, which, besides the figure, have points or horns which serve for ornament, and these horns are call'd *Thagin*, that is to say, *Crowns*. The Rabbins affirm that God gave them to *Moses* upon the Mount *Sinai*, and that He taught him how to make them. *R. Seem Tob* has writ a Treatise of these Crowns, where he observes they have been neglected by most of the Grammarians, who have not been sufficiently instructed in the mysteries which he pretends to have had from the *Talmud*. For example, he makes seven points or crowns to belong to the letter *Aleph*, five of which are on the top of the letter, three on the left hand, and two on the right, and two others at the bottom

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at the end of the left hand. The Law has seven *Alephs* after this manner. The *Beth* is writ with three of these Crowns, two of which are on the top, which go up with a sharp point, and another which is likewise on the top of the letter, but the point inclines a little towards the bottom, and there are in the Law four of this sort of *Beths*. The *Ghimel* has four Crowns on the top, and there are but three of these *Ghimels* in the Law. *Daleth* has likewise four Crowns, and there are six of these crown'd *Daleths* in the Law. It is not necessary to tell the Crowns of the other letters, or to spend more time about this vain superstition, which makes not the Hebrew Copies more correct.

Secondly, There are a great many ceremonies in the writing of these Manuscripts, because this Nation, who looks upon it self holy and separate from all others, does nothing wherein they use not some particular thing or other. The *Jews* are not permitted to write the Books destin'd for the Synagogue upon the skin of any Animal, but onely upon that of clean Animals, otherwise the Books would be prophane, and could not be read. It is necessary that this skin be prepared after a certain manner, by a *Jew* who is neither Apostate nor Heretick, and who prepares it with an intention for the Law to be written in it. Every sort of ink likewise is not to be us'd, and there are certain things requir'd in the making of this ink, and amongst other things there is to be no *Copperas*.

Thirdly, The skin upon which it is writ ought to have a certain proportion as well in its length as breadth. It ought to be rul'd before the writing, it not being permitted to write more than three words in a place not rul'd, which makes the lines streight, and one letter is not larger than another; care is likewise to be taken that neither the letters nor words join one to another, and therefore there is left the space of a thread or hair between each letter, and betwixt the words the space of a little letter; the length of a line is to be of thirty letters, and betwixt each line is to be the space of a line. As they have divided the *Pentateuch* into certain Sections, some of which they call close and others open, it has likewise been necessary for that very reason to leave void spaces. Three letters are left for the close Sections and nine for the open ones. Beside these Sections there are yet greater, for which greater void spaces are left, and the letters are not to be press'd for the adjusting of them to the proportion

portion of the spaces, or the length of the lines, but they are to be writ in so distinct a manner, that a Child may read them without mistaking those which are alike one for the other.

Fourthly, These Books are to be taken from other faithfull and authentick Copies, and the Kings heretofore took their Copy from the Original preserv'd in the Sanctuary. After these Books are writ they are to be examin'd whether they are true Copies, and to be corrected by an authentick Copy; if nevertheless in the reading many faults appear, as for example, four in every page or side, they are to be look'd upon as prophane, and others are to be writ. I mention not some other little niceties, not necessary to be known.

There are none who consider so great an exactness, but would at first conclude that the Jewish Copies, especially those they use in the Synagogues are free from all faults whatsoever, but they are mistaken, forasmuch as all these nice rules are not of a sufficient antiquity. If the Septuagint, and other Interpreters of the Bible, had had Copies thus writ and from other authentick Books, there would not have been so great a difference in their Translations proceeding from the variety of readings. If these rules had always been observ'd, the ancient Translatours would not have confounded so many letters which resemble one another, and they would not have join'd words which ought to have been separated, or separated words which were to be join'd. The Hebrew Text was heretofore writ as all other ancient Books were, and the Law may be said to have contain'd but one *Pasyk* or Verse. There was no distinction of Sections or Chapters; the divisions which are call'd *Parascioth* were invented, as in all other ancient Books, for the conveniency of private persons. The Books of *Homer* were not at first divided as they are at present, this division was made by Criticks or Grammarians, as may be seen in the Commentaries of *Eustathius* upon the *Iliads*, and without doubt it is the same with the Hebrew Jewish Text. Criticks are the Authours of these distinctions, which are not to be ascribed to *Moses*; the *Samaritans* in this agree not with the *Jews*, having invented other divisions by the help of certain points, which divide words, part of periods, and even whole periods one from another. They have likewise particular marks to distinguish the Sections, which they have more of in their *Pentateuch* than the *Jews* have in their Copies.

*Eustat. in  
Hom. Iliad.*

In a word, all the divisions in the ancient Books were invented by Criticks or Grammarians, as were the present points and comma's amongst the Greeks and Latins. When the *Jews* say they make no distinction of any Verse in the Law but what *Moses* made, 'tis an hyperbolical way of speaking, which signifies that they have made no distinction of Verses and Sections in the Law, which agrees not with the Tradition they pretend to have receiv'd from *Moses*, which nevertheless is not altogether true.

Talmud.  
Tractat.  
Megil.

Rambam in  
Tad. Tract.  
de lib. leg.

*Rambam* affirms that as for the distinction of Sections, he has found them very confus'd in ancient Copies, which agree not one with another in this point., and moreover the *Talmudists* agree not always in this with the present *Massoret*.

Lastly, The Copies us'd in the Synagogues are all writ without points for vowels and accents; because there have been innovations made in the Copies writ for the use of private persons; which proves the late invention of points and accents, which are not inserted into publick Books. The points, as we shall hereafter prove, were invented onely for the better fixing of the reading of the Text, and the making of it easie to unskilfull persons; and as for the accents, there are two sorts of them, one of which distinguishes the parts of discourse, as our points and comma's do; and the other serves for pricks in Musick. These accents were invented by some Jewish Doctours, who would distinguish the Text of the Bible by points and comma's, as the Greek and Latin Grammarians have done in their Books; the others being almost the same with the Notes we use in Musick, were without doubt invented by their Doctours, to shew more exactly how one ought to sing in the reading of the Law.

As for other Manuscripts of the Bible not dedicated to the use of the Synagogues, there is not so much care taken in the writing of them, and therefore there are very few good ones, because it is hard to find learned and faithfull Transcribers; and besides the *Jews* study more the *Talmud* and their Traditions than their Tongue and the holy Scripture. They much neglect both Grammar and Criticism, so that most of the *Jews* understand not the *Massoret*, which is a Criticism of the Hebrew Text; the Spaniards onely have refin'd the Hebrew Tongue, and have been curious in getting good Manuscripts. Next to the Spaniards are the *Jews* of *France* and *Italy*, and the worst Manuscripts are those which

which come from *Germany*. One may easily distinguish one from the other by the make of the Characters, which are much greater in the Books which come from *Germany* than in those writ either by the French or Spaniards. The Spanish Character is wholly square and comely; the French and Italian is a little rounder and not so gracefull. *Robert Stephens* and *Plantins* Hebrew Bibles in *Quarto*, come nigh the Spanish Characters, and the R. R. *David Kimhi* and *Elias Levita* commend very much the Spanish Manuscripts, which they prefer before all others. The Arabians being near were the cause why after their example they refin'd their Tongue, and they learnt from them, as we shall hereafter see, how to make Grammars and Dictionaries; we can no where find so good Manuscripts of the Bible as at *Constantinople*, *Salonica* and some other places of the *Levant*, whither the Spanish *Jews* fled, when they were driven out of *Spain*.

## C H A P. XXII.

*Rules how to know good Manuscripts from bad ones. A particular examination of some Manuscripts.*

WHEN we would judge of a good manuscript Copy of the Bible, we ought to examin for whom it was writ, for most of those which have been writ by mean private persons are very faulty. On the contrary, those which have been writ for rich persons, who were of quality amongst the *Jews*, are much exacter, because they were generally writ by understanding Transcribers, and from the most ancient and exact Copies which could be found. I never saw any thing more fine and noble than a certain Copy in three great Volumes, which was writ in the year 1207 by a *Jew* call'd *Moses Cohen* Son of R. *Solomon Cohen*, for the most noble Seigneur *Hannasci*, or *Theodore Levite*, Son of the most noble Seigneur *Hannasci R. Meir*. I believe this *Hannasci Theodore* is him mention'd in the Travels of R. *Benjamin*, where *Narbonne* is call'd the *Mistress of the Law*, because it spreads it self from this place all over the world, and amongst the



the great Doctours of this Town, he mentions first of all R. *Kalomiros*, Son of *Hannasci*, R. *Theodore* of the Family of *David*, and he farther adds that he was very rich. *Monfieur de Sancy* brought this Copy with many others from *Constantinople*, but I have seen onely one part, which contains the History of *Joshua* and the other Books which the *Jews* call Prophetical.

This Book is writ in a fair, square, and well-proportion'd Character; it was at first writ without points from an ancient manuscript Copy, but the *Jews*, into whose hands it afterwards came, have added points, which may easily be discover'd by several marks yet remaining: For they have not onely made this addition, but they have wholly reform'd it by the *Massoret*, and taken out of many places *Vau's* and *Jod's*, and some other letters, to make it agree with the present Copies. There is also in this Copy fewer *Keris* and *Cetibs*, that is to say various readings, than in the *Massoret* Copies; but they have corrected it in this and many other considerable places. We cannot attribute the variations of this Copy to the Transcriber, because, besides that it is very exactly writ, the corrections are onely in those places where it differ'd from the *Massoret*, and where there was no error. Instead of reforming this Copy by the *Massoret* it had been proper to have reform'd the *Massoret* by it, and some others which I have seen, where there are fewer *Keris* and *Cetibs*. *Father Morin* ought to have followed this method, instead of multiplying of these variations. There are also fewer of those letters the *Jews* call great, little, turn'd upside downwards, misplac'd, and such other niceties which the *Jews* superstitiously observe in the present Bibles. *John Viccars*, an Englishman, affirms that, in the ancient manuscripts which he has seen, there are none of these variations, but he has not sufficiently examin'd them, because there is no Manuscript so exact but what has some, although in the good and ancient Manuscripts there are fewer than in the printed ones. By this means we may in many places restore the Hebrew Text, and take away the ridiculous niceties which the *Jews* have left, and which we to this day keep.

The *Jews* of *Amsterdam* have lately printed a Hebrew Bible in two Volumes in *Octavo*, with this Title; *Biblia Sacra Hebraea correctata, collata cum antiquissimis & accuratissimis exemplaribus Manuscriptis*. *Leusden*, Hebrew Professour in *Utrecht*, who has made a Latin Preface before this Edition, mentions the good manuscript Copies the

the *Jews* made use of; but the reasons he gives for the goodness of these Manuscripts, do all prove them not to be exact. He quotes first a Manuscript of the year 1200, where the great and little *Massoret* is. The great is writ with several Figures of Dogs, Bears, Bulls and other Animals. This Doctour adds that all curious persons ought to see this Copy; but I am of another opinion, because the Manuscripts where the great *Massoret* is writ with these Figures, are not exact, and most of them are in German, French, or Italian Characters. The Jewish Transcribers in the making of these sort of *Animals*, hide their own faults the better, because it is hard to reade the *Massoret* thus writ, and they are never the more exact in the Text, where there are many failures corrected, which evidently demonstrates a bad Copy; The good Spanish Manuscripts have none of these Figures, the *Massoret* is writ in the Margin onely, and so neatly that it may be very easily read.

The same *Leusden* quotes another Manuscript which he affirms was writ at *Toledo* 900 years ago, and is now kept at *Hambourg*. But any one who has seen many manuscript Copies of the Bible will not so easily rely upon the testimony of the *Jews*. This Manuscript, pretended to be writ 900 years ago at *Toledo*, is a forg'd one, and what has occasion'd this falsity is, that the *Jews* sometimes mention in their Books a certain Copy which they call the Copy of *Hillel*, which they highly esteem. *R. D. Kimhi*, who has spoke of it, says that the *Pentateuch* of this ancient Copy was at *Toledo*, and that in the Book intituled *Jubasin* there is spoke of a great persecution in the Kingdom of *Leon* in *Spain* in the year 956, and that there was then taken an ancient Copy of the Bible writ by *R. Hillel*, by which they corrected the other Copies.

The same Authour of the *Jubasin* farther adds that he had seen one part of it which was sold in *Africa*, and that this Copy had been writ 900 years ago. This is the reason why this Manuscript is said to be writ above 900 years ago. *R. David Ganz* has said the same thing in his Chronology, and this Kingdom of *Leon* here spoken of, is not the Town of *Lyons* in *France*, as *Vorstius* in his Latin Translation of this Chronology has affirm'd, but the Kingdom of *Leon* in *Spain*.

It is necessary we should more particularly examin this Manuscript, that we may take away all prejudice which any one may have

have for its antiquity, by reason of the famous name of R. *Hillel*, who has impos'd upon many learned men. *Schikardus* has affirm'd that this same *Hillel*, at the return from Captivity, writ the Copy which goes under his name. *Cuneus* makes the Author of this Manuscript to be another *Hillel*, who came from *Babylon* into *Syria* 60 years before the birth of our Saviour, and for this reason he calls it *veneranda antiquitatis Codicem*. It is strange that so understanding persons should speak so boldly of a Copy they had no knowledge of. Father *Morin*, who had seen Manuscripts where the various readings of *Hillel* were mark'd in the Margin, has spoke more exactly, and he allows it to be but 500 years old; but the reasons he brings to prove this Copy to be but 500 years old are false, for he proves it by reason of the Manuscripts, where these varieties of *Hillel* are mark'd, being but 500 years old. The Copy of *Hillel* might be ancient, although the various readings were put in the Margins of another Copy, which was not above 500 years old. If his argument held good the Manuscript of *Hillel* could not be so ancient, because the marginal Notes of the Copy where they were plac'd, were put in sometime after the Copy had been writ.

We cannot however doubt but that the Copy of *Hillel* is of late date, because most of the various readings of this Copy consist in little niceties, which have been invented by Grammarians but few ages ago. For example, you may see in the Copy of *Hillel* an *Hirich*, a *Petab*, a *Dagech*, that this word is writ with a *Camets*, or a *Petab*, with a *Scheva* without *Mappic*. The most considerable variations of this Copy are in the 21st Chapter of *Joshua*. We may then take notice, that some *Jews*, to authorise the *Massoret*, where two Verses of this Chapter are left out, which are in many other Copies, have observ'd them to be wanting in the Manuscript of *Hillel*. And they have moreover blotted out these two Verses out of the Copy of R. *Theodore*, which we just now spoke of, so certain it is that the *Jews* make no scruple of reforming their Copies when they find them differ from others which they believe to be authentick. As this is a variation of consequence, we shall explain it more at large.

The two Verses in the 21st Chapter of *Joshua* which are wanting in the *Massoret* Copies are not onely in the Septuagint and Vulgar, but also in many Hebrew Bibles printed in several places. *Massius* is of opinion that this is an ancient fault since it is in  
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the *Massoret* Copy, and he besides observes that the printed Bibles, where these two are found, are also defective, because the names of *Jericho*, *Jordan*, *Sanctuary* are left out, but the name of *Sanctuary* or *City of Refuge*, is in the Manuscript of R. *Theodore*. And it is not necessary to mention *Jericho* or *Jordan*, since they add nothing to the sense, and that the four material Towns are express'd. We read in this Manuscript *Of the Tribe of Reuben Besser, City of Refuge, &c.* we ought by this reading to supply what is wanting in the other Copies, and we may say that Father *Morin* is out, where he observes that the Transcriber, who had writ these words at length in the Copy of R. *Theodore*, has blotted them out, and put a note in the Margin concerning the Copy of *Hillel* where they are not. He has not observ'd that the marginal Notes of this excellent Manuscript were later writ than the Text of that same Copy, which had been taken from another more ancient Copy, which in this differ'd from the *Massoret*: we ought also by this Copy to correct the observation of *Kimhi*, who affirms he had not seen those two Verses in any correct Copy, since they are not onely in the Manuscript of *Theodore*, but also in some other good Spanish Copies; besides that they ought necessarily to be inserted, or the sense will else be imperfect. *Grotius* affirms with *Kimhi* that in the Copies where they are, they have been added and taken from the *Chronicles*, but it is more probable they were at first writ in the Book of *Joshua* as well as in the *Chronicles*, and that afterwards they were left out by Transcribers. The name of *Tribe*, which is often repeated in these Verses, may have occasion'd this fault, and this is usual enough with Transcribers, whose minds are troubled with these repetitions of the same words, as we can prove by other examples.

Besides the Copy of *Hillel* the *Jews* esteem the Copies of the Rabbins *Ben Ascher*, and *Ben Nephali*. These two Doctours are commonly suppos'd to have liv'd about the year 1034; but it would be difficult to tell exactly when they liv'd. Besides *Elias Levita* is of opinion that they were Masters of some famous Universities. However it is, we need onely read the various readings we have under their names, to be convinc'd that they are not very ancient, since they use those little niceties of Grammar as well as R. *Hillel*. R. *Moses*, Son of *Maimon*, affirms that in his time the Copy of R. *Ascher* was in great esteem both in *Palestine* and *Egypt*, that he himself had followed it in the Copy

Rambam in  
Tratt. de  
Ragibus.

of the Law which he had writ for his own private use. It is probable that those who were Heads or Rectours of famous Schools, apply'd themselves to the correcting of the Copies of the Bible, and that their Criticism or Correction pass'd current throughout a whole Province. This I believe is the reason why the Copy of R. Ben Ascher is so famous in *Agypt*. R. Moses affirms that this same Ben Ascher spent many years in correcting of his Copy, and that he review'd it several times. This has made the Jews be divided into Eastern and Western by reason of the various readings of the Scripture. The Eastern Jews were those of *Babylon*, and the Western those of *Jerusalem*.

There is printed a Catalogue of all these variations, as well of R. Ascher and *Nepthali*, as of the Eastern and Western Jews. Those who cannot read them take these variations to be of importance; but most of them consist onely in trifles; and besides the manuscript Copies of these Catalogues which I have seen agree not always with the printed ones. Others on the contrary, who find these variations to be of no consequence, fancy the Hebrew Text to be very correct, without observing that for the understanding of the state of the Hebrew Text, we must run a little higher up. When these variations were mark'd out, the Hebrew had at that time been reform'd by the *Massoret Jews*, of which we shall hereafter speak.

The Rabbins say that the Jews of *Jerusalem* followed the Copy of Ben Ascher, and that those of *Babylon* made use of that of Ben *Nepthali*. R. *Jona*, one of the chief of the Jewish Grammarians, follow'd the Copy of *Jerusalem*, which without doubt is Ben Ascher's; and thus the Jews have been divided as to their Copies; but the reformations are but of late, and they fancy there are others yet greater, which have not seriously been consider'd. We ought however from thence to infer that the Hebrew Text is not wholly free from faults, since famous Rabbins, and the chief of Universities have spent time in making it more exact even after the *Massoret* correction.

## CHAP. XXIII.

*The manuscript Copies of the Text of the Bible particularly consider'd. Rise of the various readings, which proceed from the different ways of writing the Manuscripts.*

I Thought it would be more usefull to make here some reflections upon the manuscript Copies of the Bible in general, than to be tedious in the summing of them up one by one. In distinguishing then the good Manuscripts from the bad, we are to take care that the Character be plain, well-proportion'd, and that there is nothing extraordinary in it. *Leusden* shews his ignorance in this point, by commending one of the Manuscripts which had been made use of in the Edition of the *Holland Bible*, which we have already spoke of, because the Capital Letters were writ in Gold. But the Jews would never suffer any Copies in their Synagogues without the Letters were all writ in Ink. Private persons however took greater liberty in the copying out of the Books they intended for their private use. I have seen a Manuscript which had 24 Books of the Bible, which had been writ at *Perpignan* in the year 1300 in a neat Character; however the Transcriber had put at the end of the letters certain little points for ornaments sake; and this way of adorning of letters, which I have found in some manuscript Copies, has occasion'd much confusion, forasmuch as these little points have made several letters alike. For example, the letters *Beth*, *Daleth*, *Resch*, and *Caph*, when they have these little points at top, which encline downwards, are easily mistaken for the letter *Mem*; and *Mem* may easily be taken for *Phe*; *Daleth* for *Heth*, &c. In comparing the Septuagint Translation with the present Hebrew Text, we shall find many of these examples. As in the 19th Chapter of *Joshua* and the 21st Verse, instead of *Seba* as it is in the Hebrew, the Septuagint have read in their Copy *Sema* by changing the *Beth* into *Mem*. We may ascribe to this way of writing some of the various readings which are call'd *Keri* and *Cetib*, many of them being caus'd by the changing of *Beth* into *Phe*, *Beth* into *Mem*, *Caph* into *Phe*, &c. There are Manuscripts where *Daleth*

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## C H A P. XXIII.

*The manuscript Copies of the Text of the Bible particularly consider'd. Rise of the various readings, which proceed from the different ways of writing the Manuscripts.*

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and *Resch* have points upon the top of them, which make them hard to be distinguish'd from *Lamed*.

There is another way of writing of Copies which has occasion'd many various readings. Some Transcribers at the end of a line huddle the letters so one upon another that it is hard to distinguish *Caph* at the end from a *Vau*; on the contrary, when Transcribers have too much room they make the *Vau* bigger, and then it may be taken for *Caph* at the end of a line. *Jod* is sometimes for the same reason taken for *Caph*. The letters being too much press'd one upon another, one may easily mistake *He* for *Heth*. We moreover read *Zain* for *Daleth*; and it is very difficult to distinguish *Caph* at the end of a line from *Zain*. *Nun* and *Vau* join'd together are sometimes taken for *Mem*. I have observ'd another sort of variety, which proceeds from the Transcribers ruling their Parchment for to write streight, so that the Pen letting down thereupon often changes one letter into another. For example, from the letter *He* a *Mem* may be made, the *He* being clos'd at the bottom. After the same manner of a *Resch* or *Daleth* one may make a *Beth*.

I pass by several other alterations which we have examples of in old manuscript Copies of the Hebrew Text of the Bible, and in ancient Translations. Which makes me think that the *Jews* were not always so exact in the writing of their Copies as they are at present. It is probable that the Jewish Doctours did not make all those rules we have already spok'd of till they found how confus'd their Copies were, but they could not wholly correct them. For as the genius of the Tongue remains still the same, the Writers are still subject to the same faults; and by the Manuscripts which we have at present we may easily discover the faults of the ancient ones, and by this means give reasons of the various readings. It is true that the *Jews* at present are very exact in the writing of their Copies, by which we may correct the others: but these new Copies are not to be look'd upon as an infallible rule, since before that time the *Jews* had very much neglected their Books, and that heretofore all their Manuscripts were very confus'd; we cannot correct this disorder but by diligently observing the causes of the various readings, by preferring those which make the best sense or are backed with the greatest number of Copies.

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The *Jews* would have done well to have mark'd in the Margin of their Copies the various readings in the most ancient Manuscripts, as some have done, but that is rare. We might by this means have shewn that the Septuagint and other ancient Interpreters had reason sometimes to read otherwise than we at present do in our Hebrew Copies. I have, in reading some Spanish Manuscripts, observ'd several such varieties as *S. Jerom* takes notice of in his Epistle to *Junia* and *Fretella*. For example, the name of *Jehova* is sometimes twice repeated, as in the beginning of *Psalms* 16 we read twice after this manner in a good Spanish Manuscript the word *Lord*, *Thou hast said to the Lord*, *Lord thou art*; and in the 30th Chapter of *Ezekiel* the same word *Jehova* is twice repeated thus: *The day of the Lord draws nigh, and the day of the Lord draws nigh*. The word *col*, which signifies *all*, is sometimes left out in the Copies and in other places it is added. But it is to no purpose to observe these various readings which alter not the sense, and are generally occasion'd by Transcribers who often repeat the same words twice.

There are others which alter the sense, as some words which have been put one for another, wherein the Septuagint differs very much from the present Hebrew Text. There is an ancient Copy which observes in the Margin that in the sixth Chapter of the first Book of *Chronicles*, instead of *Michael* there were some Manuscripts which read *Malacias*. The changing of Genders, Numbers, and Persons, which is usual in the Septuagint, may also be found in some Hebrew Manuscripts. The negative particles, and the word *et* which in Hebrew denotes the accusative Case, are not always in those Manuscripts as they are in our Copies; wherefore when this falls out both in the Septuagint and other ancient Translations, we ought to suspend our judgment till we find which agrees best with the truth.

For example, we read according to the present Hebrew in the first Book of *Chronicles* Chap. 2. Ver. 48. *Pileges Caleb Maaca* Chron. 1, 2, *jalad Seber*, which the Septuagint and Vulgar has translated, *Ma-* 48. *achah Caleb's Concubine bare Shehar*, and consequently instead of *Jalad* we ought to read *Jaleda* in the Fœminine, because the word *Concubine* is Fœminine in the Hebrew. This last reading agrees with an ancient Spanish Manuscript; but some modern Interpreters, following exactly the present Hebrew, have translated by way of Paraphrase, *Maachah Caleb's Concubine, of whom he be-*



he *begat Sheban*; The Text ought rather to have been corrected by the Septuagint and vulgar Translations. In the same Spanish Copy we read in 2 *Chron.* Chap. 3. Ver. 19. *Bene Jerubabel* in the plural, *the Children of Jerubabel*, whereas both in ours and the *Massoret* Copies it is *Ben Jerubabel* in the singular. But both the sense and Septuagint Translation, as well as several other places of the same Chapter, plainly shew that we ought to read *Bene* in the plural.

Besides these variations there are yet greater, whereof we may find examples in Manuscripts which have not been carefully copied out. The Writers, who are negligent in transcribing of their Copies, sometimes leave out whole periods, especially when they meet with two the same words a little distance one from another, they take the latter, and leave out the sense betwixt. I have seen examples of these faults in a Copy writ in large and fair German Characters, where there has been some Pronouns left out. We ought to lay aside these sort of Manuscripts, and keep to those which have been writ by learned and exact Transcribers. The modern Manuscripts may indeed be easily corrected, but the ancient ones cannot, wherein we find these sort of mistakes, and they are so ancient that we can find no other Copies whereby to correct them. I am of opinion we ought to ascribe hereto most of the imperfect Genealogies in the *Chronicles* and the Book of *Esdra*s. There are, for example, six Generations left out in the 7th Chapter of *Esdra*s and the 3d Verse, which may be supply'd by the 1st of *Chronicles* and the 6th Chapter, where the same Genealogy is fully set down. Now it is plain that in the 7th Chapter of *Esdra*s the Transcriber has left out what was between the two same words *Achitob*, and that he took the latter.

I have also observ'd in reading this German Manuscript, that whole numbers have been left out in the Chronology, and this omission can onely be ascribed to the Transcribers imagination, who easily mistake when words are twice repeated in the same place. I shall onely give one example, which is in the 3d Chapter of *Genesis* and the 31st Verse, where we read *Seva Vesi veim sana, u seva meoth sana*, that is to say, *seventy seven years*, the Transcriber has onely writ *seva vesi veim sana*, and as the word *sana* was twice repeated, he has join'd the latter with what followed and left out the words betwixt. I am therefore of opinion that

that we ought partly to ascribe this variety in Chronology to this repetition of words which confounds the Transcriber's fancy. I know that some affirm that the Transcribers have put one letter for another, and that from thence has proceeded the difference in numbers, because the Hebrews as well as Greeks us'd no other Cyphers but their letters; but the *Jews* writ the numbers in the Text of the Bible by words at length, and not by either cyphers or letters; and it is probable that they have not differ'd herein.

I do not think it necessary here to speak of some Copies which the *Jews* affirm are as ancient as *Esdra*s, because whatever is hereupon said is fictitious, and it would be hard to find at present any Hebrew Manuscript of the Bible above 900 years old. We ought also to reckon that fabulous which the *Samaritans* tell us concerning the antiquity of a Copy of the Law which they say was writ in *Phineas*'s time. It is very hard to think that the *Jews* could preserve any ancient Copies through so many calamities and banishments, besides that some ages since they reform'd them all by the *Massoret*; and they value not those which agree not with it. Besides the old manuscript Copies of the Bible are bury'd with the Doctours. I take no notice here of the varieties in the ancient Copies concerning the letters *Aleph* and *He*, or concerning the letters which the Grammarians call full and deficient, because they are enough to fill a Volume. The *Jews* own these divers readings; but they say the *Massoret* ought to be their rule. *R. Menahem Lonzano* has collected a great many of them from several manuscript Copies; but as these varieties consist generally but in niceties of Grammar relating to the points and accents, we need not set them here down, since in the ancient Copies there were neither points nor accents.

We might also make a Catalogue of the various readings in the printed Bibles much larger than either *Father Morin*'s or *Ludovicus Capellus*'s; but this would be an unnecessary Work consisting onely in niceties. The printed Bibles have been taken from modern Copies.

*Lindanus* and some other Authours have affirm'd that there was in England an ancient Hebrew *Psalter*, which differs from ours at present, and was writ 950 years ago, and that it agreed pretty well with the vulgar Latin one. But *Isaac Levita* has shewn that this Manuscript was a feign'd Copy, and that it was rather Latin

*R. Menah.  
Lonzano in  
Secte Padet.*

*Lind. lib. 2.  
Opt. Gen.  
interpret.  
Isaac Levit.  
in defens.  
ver. Heb.*

Latin Hebrew than in true and real Hebrew. *Arias Montanus*, who has seen this Copy, affirms that it was writ by some Christian, who knew how to write Hebrew, and that it was full of faults, Wherefore we ought to examin the Hebrew Manuscripts, which we oppose the *Jews* with, as if they had falsify'd their Books; But because the *Jews* at present correct all the various readings in the Hebrew Copies of the Bible by the *Massoret*, we ought particularly to treat thereupon.

## C H A P. XXIV.

*Of the Massoret. The different opinions of the Jews and Christians hereupon. What we ought to believe.*

Many call the Hebrew Copy of the Bible, which we at present make use of, the *Massoret* Copy, because they affirm that certain persons call'd *Massorets* have corrected the ancient Copies, and reduc't them to the order they are at present in. For the better understanding this last reformation of the *Jews*, it is necessary for us to explain what the *Massoret* signifies.

The word *Massoret* properly signifies *Tradition*, as if the Criticism of the Hebrew Text, which the *Jews* call *Massoret*, was onely a Tradition wick they had receiv'd from their Fathers. *Buxtorf*, who follow'd this study for several years together, has defin'd it, *A critical Doctrine upon the Hebrew Text, invented by the ancient Jewish Doctours, whereby they have counted the verses, words, and letters of the Text and observ'd all the varieties the better to preserve them from changing.* Every one knows that the *Massoret* is a criticism upon the Hebrew Text, but men agree not about the time it was first invented in, nor that it serves for a fence to the Law, as the *Jews* say, to defend it from any changes which may happen. *Buxtorf* has took what he has writ hereupon from the *Jews*, who are not altogether to be believ'd, because they are very ignorant even of their own History, and are too much conceited of the preservation of their Text, as if they onely had had the secret of hindring their holy Books from being chang'd,

chang'd, which certainly would be a special privilege, which the Christians have not had as to the New Testament; thus there is nothing but ostentation in what *Buxtorf* says concerning the *Massoret* out of the Jewish Doctours. And we shall hereafter shew that the *Massoret*, which the *Jews* have so high a veneration for, has not more carefully been kept than the Greek, Latin and Arabick Books.

Father *Morin*, and *Ludovicus Capellus*, who are of a contrary opinion to *Buxtorf*, have spoke too passionately against the *Massoret*, which they seem to be prejudic'd against. They have however plainly shewn, that we cannot attribute either to *Esdras* or any other Assembly in his time what the *Jews* ascribe to the *Massoret*. *Arias Montanus* had treated in short upon this matter before *Buxtorf*; but he spoke of a thing he did not understand. Most of the Protestants have blindly followed *Buxtorf*'s opinion, not being able to judge throughly herein. *Walton* however, who is a judicious person, and not led away by passion, has followed the opinion of *Ludovicus Capellus*; and although he understood not throughly all the difficulties herein, he was understanding enough to distinguish truth from what was false. As for the Rabbins, we ought to prefer the judgment of *Elias Levita* herein before all others; because he is the onely *Jew* who has rightly study'd this point.

Since then I examin the *Massoret* as an Historian and without prejudice, no one ought to wonder that I follow neither *Buxtorf*'s nor Father *Morin*'s nor *Ludovicus Capellus*'s opinion. I have read the *Massoret* my self and, having translated most of it for my private use, am of opinion that, although there are abundance of frivolous niceties, yet, there are many Rules which may be of great use for the reconciling of the ancient Translations with the modern ones.

*Elias Levita*, in a Book upon this Subject, agrees with the other *Jews* that *Esdras*, at the return from Captivity, re-establish'd the Books of the Scripture; but he denies, against the common opinion of the *Jews*, that *Esdras* was the Authour of the vowel-points, accents, and several other things in the present Hebrew Text. He affirms that they were invented by the Jewish Doctours of *Tiberias*, which was one of their most famous Universities; he however adds that this Criticism was not all made at one time nor by the same Doctours, but it had been a composing by little and little for some ages.

Many learned Criticks amongst the Christians have been of *Elias Levita's* opinion, and have given many other reasons to shew that what the *Jews* usually make *Esdra's* the Authour of was not invented even in *S. Jerom's* time.

As for *Elias Levita's* making the *Jews* of *Tiberias* to be Authours of good part of this *Massoret* that is very probable, because that in *S. Epiphanius's* and *S. Jerom's* time the University of *Tiberias* was counted one of the best the *Jews* had for the Hebrew Tongue. *S. Jerom* had a Jewish Doctour from this School or University to instruct him in the holy Tongue, and to help him to translate some Books of the Bible. It was also a *Jew* of *Tiberias*, who, under the Reign of *Leon Isauricus*, advis'd *Ezidas*, an Arabian Prince, to set out some Decrees against the Images of the Christians. Father *Morin* however endeavours to prove that they of *Tiberias* were the dullest and most ignorant *Jews*, especially as to the Hebrew Tongue: but he has not took notice that we speak not here of the people of *Tiberias*, or any other *Galileans*, who spoke Hebrew very ill, but of a School of Doctours in that place establish'd.

Concil.  
2 Nic.  
an. 5.

Morin ex-  
erc. Bib.

Epist. Hebr.  
El. ad Munst.

*Munster*, having writ to *Elias Levita*, who was then at *Venice*, concerning the *Jews* of *Tiberias*, receiv'd this answer from him, that *R. Jona* one of the first Grammarians valu'd the *Jews* of *Tiberias* above all others for their knowledge in the Hebrew Tongue, which they pronounc'd better than the others of their Nation; and besides that *Aben Esra* was of opinion that they had invented the points and accents which are in the Hebrew Text of the Bible.

Buxtorf in  
Lib. conc.  
arcan. fund.  
revel.

*Buxtorf* the Son has nevertheless endeavour'd to reconcile *Aben Esra's* opinion with what the other *Jews* commonly think; but we find the clear contrary in the Books which this Rabbin has writ call'd *Tsahut*, *Moznaim*, and in his Commentaries upon the holy Scripture.

Morin ex-  
erc. Bibl.

Father *Morin* has given us some general illustrations upon the *Massoret*, but he sometimes therein inveighs too much against the *Jews*, and he makes *Aben Esra* to say some things which are not in his Works, as he there relates them. For example, he affirms that *Aben Esra*, in his Book intituled *Jesud Mora*, calls the *Massoret* a Work full of difficulties, hard questions, and obscurities. But he understood not this Rabbin's words which he quotes otherwise than they are in the manuscript Copy, whence he pretends to have them. He has chang'd the letter *Daleth* into

*Resch*,

*Resch*, and instead of reading *Nabmadim*, as it is in the Manuscript, he has read *Nehmarim*, we ought then, according to Father *Morin*, to translate *Nonnulli sunt ex Doctis & sapientibus Israel, quorum omnis scientia versatur in cognitione Massora & signorum ejus difficilium & enigmatum obscurorum*, but to translate truly we ought to say, *In cognitione Massora & signorum ejus honorabilium, & signorum ejus desideratissimorum*. It is true that *Aben Esra* in other places seems not to value the *Massoret*, whose reasons he says are childish; but he then blames onely some allegorical reasons of the *Massoret*, and some niceties which are too much esteemed. We ought indeed to keep the medium with this learned *Jew*, and value in the *Massoret* onely what is worthy our esteem.

*Aben Esra* design'd, in his Book intituled *Jesud Mora*, chiefly to commend Tradition or the oral Law: wherefore in the beginning he speaks of most Sciences which he values not at all, unless we study the true Divinity, which according to him is grounded upon Tradition: and for this reason he compares the *Massorets*, who have counted the verses, words and letters of the Text of the Bible, to them who should count the pages of a physical Book, without applying any thing else to the sick person. He speaks not there absolutely and in general, but onely in relation to the study of Divinity; and he affirms that they who study the *Massoret* without reading of the *Talmud*, wherein their Traditions are contain'd, are much like these sort of people. He speaks as much of the other Sciences, and therefore Father *Morin* had no reason to think that these words of *Aben Esra* destroy'd the *Massoret*, which prove that the *Massoret* is of no use without we understand the true Divinity. *Aben Esra* look'd upon the *Massoret* as a criticisme made by learned *Jews* who throughly understood the Hebrew Tongue.

*Buxtorf*, and most of the other Authours who have took out of the Rabbins Books what they have writ concerning the *Massoret*, have not seriously consider'd those Rabbins ways of speaking. As the *Jews* esteem any thing which belongs to them they commend it at an extraordinary rate, without considering whether they speak true or no; and when they meet with any difficulty which they cannot resolve, they conceal their ignorance under the specious title of Tradition. They immediately fly to *Moses* or else to *Esdra's*, whom they make the Authours of what they understand not. Hence it is that the Rabbins have so highly prais'd the

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*Massoret*.

*Massoret.* We ought however to value this Criticism upon the Hebrew Text since it was made by learned *Jews*, who have consulted the best Copies they could find, and their calling of it the *Massoret* sufficiently shews that they have followed Tradition as their principal Rule.

Although the way of reading Hebrew was fix'd by custom, yet it was not really so in it self, and the Doctours of the School of *Tiberias* thought it necessary to fix this custom by certain marks which they introduc'd in the Hebrew Text. We cannot however say that the reading of their time, and in their Province has always been the same, because it is certain that the Septuagint, and other ancient Interpreters have sometimes read otherwise than the *Massorets* have done. *S. Jerom*, who was nearer their time, and had been instructed by the *Jews* of this School, comes nigher their way of reading the Hebrew Text, and this Tradition does not seem to have been always certain, but that it has been chang'd according to different times and places. We ought to judge of the correction of the Bible made by the *Jews* of *Tiberias* as we do of other good Books, which have been printed from good Manuscripts and reviewed by learned Criticks. This hinders us not however from reviewing and correcting of them again by the same rules of Criticism. *Elias Levita* affirms that the Hebrew Text was faulty till the *Massorets* had corrected it. To which we may add that those *Jews* have not cleared it of all its faults, and that since they were not infallible in their correction, we ought to look upon it onely as a Work of learned Criticks. We may farther add that in some places they have rather follow'd their own conjectures than a true Tradition; which we may easily perceive by examining the pointing of some words which is wholly irregular, and especially in proper names. For example, is there any thing more ridiculous than the Greek word *Darios*, which the *Massorets* have pointed as if we ought to read *Dariaues*. They have not expres'd this word as the Chaldeans pronounc'd it, which I believe was heretofore *Dara*; but they have declin'd this and several other words as the Greeks did, which they have afterwards pointed after an odd fashion. It is probable that the *Jews* were not the first Authours of the *Massoret*, but perhaps they might borrow it from the *Mahometans*, who have such a one upon the *Alcoran*. These last were oblig'd to fix the reading of their *Alcoran* by certain vowel-points, which they added

Levit. in  
L. Mass.  
Hamm.

added to hinder disputes which might arise concerning the different way of reading this Book. And the time when the Arabians fix'd this reading agrees well enough with that of the Jewish *Massoret* in relation to the vowel-points in the Text of the Bible. But we shall treat of this hereafter in speaking of the Jewish Grammarians, who are also beholden to the Arabians for their Grammar. Let us now more particularly explain the *Massoret*, and after what manner it is compos'd.

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 CHAP. XXV.

*The Massoret more particularly explain'd. The usefull Rules therein contained, whence we may justifie the ancient Translations of the Scripture.*

THE *Massoret* was not always in the same form and method as we at present find it in the great Hebrew Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil*. It was invented by little and little by Doctours who put their observations in the margin of their Copies, as Criticks usually do, or else in other Books apart. Most of these observations have in series of time been collected, which make the body of the *Massoret* as it is at present. *Elias Levita* speaks of a Book which treats excellently well upon this Subject, and the present *Massoret* has chiefly been taken out of this Book, part of which has been put in the margins of the Bibles we just now spoke of, and the rest at the end of the same Bibles. I never saw any manuscript Copy of the Bible where it was entire. But the Transcribers have onely copied out some places, and those confusedly enough and in very little Characters. The first who publish'd it was a certain *Jew* of *Tunis*, call'd *Jacob Benhaïm*, who, being forc't to flie his Country, retir'd to *Venice*, where he carefully collected what he could out of several Manuscripts. *Bombergue* printed this Work with a great Hebrew Bible, which contain'd the Chaldee Text, and some Rabbins Commentaries upon the holy Scripture.

Levit. in  
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This *Massoret* is usually divided into the great and little one. The little *Massoret* is writ in Rabbinical letters in the inner margin of the Bible betwixt the Hebrew Text and Chaldean Paraphrase. The great one is part above part below the margins of the Text, and sometimes in the Margin below the Commentaries writ in square letters, and part at the end of the Bible as a separate Work, which is the reason why this great *Massoret* is distinguish'd into the *Massoret* of the Text, and the *Massoret* at the end of the Book. The style is very hard; for besides that it is writ in Chaldee, most of the words are abridg'd, especially in the little *Massoret*. *Elias Levita* and *Buxtorf* have made Books for the explaining of these abridgments, which very few even of the *Jews* themselves understand, and it is hard to meet with any persons who study the *Massoret*.

For the better understanding of this Collection we are to observe that at the end of the Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil* the great *Massoret* is printed according to the order of the Hebrew Alphabet, and every letter has certain letters apply'd unto it, wherein consists the whole contrivance of this *Massoret*. For example, the first rule which falls under the letter *Aleph* is thus express'd, [Alphabet of great letters] and the places where they are, are set down at the beginning of the *Chronicles*. As some letters in the Text of the Bible are not writ according to the usual method, some of them being greater, and others less than generally the letters of the Text are, the *Massorets* have mark'd them out, and put them in the great *Massoret*, where there is a Catalogue of them at the beginning of the *Chronicles*. The *Jews* having no Concordance at that time could no ways else make known the places they quoted but by setting down the words of the Text, without mentioning where they were, wherefore we ought always to have a Hebrew Concordance of the Scripture by us; For example, they quote the first Verse of *Chronicles*, which begins with a great *Aleph*, by giving onely the words of the Verse, *Adam, Seth, Enos*, and in citing of the first Verse of *Genesis* they onely give us those other words *Beresait bara Elohim*. Unless we can say almost by heart the holy Scripture it is hard to understand the *Massoret*.

They afterwards give us this other rule, [Alphabet of little letters] and the places where they are are *Vaikra*, in the beginning of *Leviticus*, *Beth habh Ghimel vegous*, &c. that is to say, there

there is a little *Beth* in the word *Hath* in the 30th Chapter of the Proverbs, and the 15th Verse, and a little *Ghimel* in the word *Gous* in the 7th Chapter of *Job* and the 5th Verse. But for fear of being tedious by giving many of these unnecessary rules, I shall onely say in general, that the *Massorets* have found the way of marking all the words of the Text as they ought to be writ, and for this reason they made certain Alphabets which they reduc'd these words to.

Although there are many unnecessary niceties in the *Massoret*, there are however many good rules which have not been seriously enough consider'd, by which we may defend the ancient Interpreters Translations, where they read otherwise than we do in the present Hebrew Text, which may be seen by the following examples.

There are seventeen words where the *Aleph* is pronounc'd; and the places wherein they are, are *Va-Abiasaph* (*Exodus* 6. 24.) *Tavin*, (*Levit.* 23. 17.) and so of the rest. On the contrary there are sixteen places where the *Aleph* is not, and those places are set down in the 2d of *Kings* and the 16th Chapter.

By applying this rule and some other such like to the ancient Translations we may easily justify them in some places where they seem to disagree with the *Massoret* Copy. We may make use of these rules of the *Massorets* in general, without particularly taking notice where they apply them, and we may extend or limit them as we find occasion: If the *Massoret* had examin'd the ancient Translations they would perhaps have apply'd their rules otherwise than they have done. Wherefore we have the liberty of extending or limiting these same rules upon the various readings of the old Copies which were us'd in the making of these ancient Translations. This Maxime is so true that *Aben Esra*, *Kimhi*, and several other Rabbins, who have literally explain'd the Scripture, have apply'd the *Massoret* rules to places where the *Massorets* had not.

We may then take the same liberty, without keeping so scrupulously to the present Hebrew Text, and then we need not forsake the ancient Interpreters so often as the modern ones have done. It would have been well if the most usefull rules of the *Massoret* had been set down in the Hebrew Dictionaries, and had been apply'd to the most proper places. Twelve words where *Aleph* at the end ought not to be read, and the places where they are, are mark'd



mark'd in the 3d Chapter of *Daniel*, and in the *Parafca*, or *Section Schalah*. We may make the same use of this rule as of the foregoing one.

There are thirteen pair of words whereof one is writ with an *Aleph* at the end and the other with an *He*, and the places where they are set down in the 10th *Pfalm*.

This last rule, as also most of the others, without doubt proceeds from the various readings in the manuscript Copies. Now as the *Massorets* Criticism were not infallible, we ought to prefer the ancient Interpreters Copies before them, and follow their rules when they furnish us with a better sense. Without making a long Catalogue, I shall onely say in general, that the *Massoret* runs over all the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet, and particularly observes how many times every word is writ with one letter for another. For example, it has counted how many words there are where *He* is put instead of *Vau*, *Aleph* for *Ain*, *Resch* for *Daleth*, *Jod* for *Vau*, and so for the rest.

Some Jewish Transcribers write these Catalogues at the beginning and end of their Copies of the Bible, and they add the other variations, call'd, by *Ben Afer* and *Ben Nephali*, the Eastern and Western, as we have already observ'd in the Copy of *Perpignan*. The *Jew* who copy'd out the various readings of this manuscript Bible affirms, that they had been inspired by God into those who writ them; but we need have no great judgment to discern that this is the work of some Criticks, and what is yet more strange is that the same Authour affirms, that although there are some letters transpos'd in many words of the Scripture, they make no alteration at all, because the Prophet, says he, who is the Authour of these transpositions, could not be mistaken. He moreover affirms that there are 47 words in the Scripture which are misplac'd, and if we will believe him God is the Authour of this confusion.

Thus the *Jews* often contradict experience and sense to follow without any reason some prejudices which they are possess'd with. This error proceeds from their being prepossess'd that *Esdras* and some Doctours of his time were the Authours of all the variations in the *Massoret*, and that consequently they cannot be call'd faults, but Criticks may be of another opinion, and ascribe them to the variety of Copies.

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We agree then with the *Jews* that the letters *Aleph* and *Ain*, *Aleph* and *He*, *Beth* and *Caph*, *He* and *Heth*, *Zain* and *Daleth*, *Heth* and *Aleph*, *Heth* and *Ain*, *Teth* and *Thau*, *Beth* and *Vau*, *Mem* and *Nun*, *Samech* and *Zain*, *Samech* and *Tzade*, *Phe* and *Mem*, *Tzade* and *Caph*, *Ghimel* and *Caph* are sometimes put one for another, which ought not to be ascribed to *Esdras* or any Doctour inspired by God, but to the Transcribers and the variety of Copies, as has often happned in Greek and Latin Books, and these alterations which are greater in the Hebrew than in the Greek, have almost reduc'd the Hebrew into different Dialects.

To conclude, the rules which the *Massorets* have collected concerning these alterations are very necessary for the discovering the nature of the ancient Manuscripts, whence they have made their Criticism. The *Massoret* however is very confus'd, and we cannot but confess that he who compos'd it took not away all the errors. *Buxtorf*, who has corrected some, has yet left a great many; we ought not however wholly to despise it, and although it is impossible to restore it throughly, we ought not to lay it altogether aside, since there are many usefull rules therein. If there are any superfluous and superstitious things, or silly niceties, we may let them alone and choose onely what is best.

## CHAP. XXVI.

*The parts of the Massoret explain'd, with critical Observations thereupon.*

THE Criticism call'd the *Massoret* takes notice of all the letters of the Hebrew Text, the points which serve instead of vowels, the accents, the words and verses, we usually suppose with the Jewish Doctours that the *Massorets* counted all the letters of the Text of the Bible, and the letter *Nau* in the word *Gehon*, *Levit. 42.* is in the *Talmud* observ'd to be in the very middle of the *Pentateuch*. Talmud treat. Kidus. Father *Morin* however denies that the *Massorets* ever counted the letters of the Hebrew Text, and the reasons he relies upon are because R. *Jacob Ben Haiim*, and *Elias Levita*, who carefully enquir'd

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quir'd after all the parts of the *Massoret*, affirm that that belonging to the letters was never publish'd. I have nevertheless seen a Manuscript of *Perpignan* wherein was this part of the *Massoret* with several others. And that no one may doubt hereof I will set them down as I read them reckon'd up in this manuscript Copy. There are 12 Parscioths or great Sections in *Genesis*. There are 43 of those which are call'd Sedarim or Orders. There are 1534 Verses, 20713 Words, 78100 Letters, and the midst of this Book consists in these words, *Ve al harveka tihieh*, in Chap. 27. Ver. 40. There are five Points, (these are Points made on the top of some letters mention'd by S. *Jerom*.) *Exodus* has 11 Parscioths, 33 Sedarims, 1209 Verses, 63467 Letters, and these words, *Elohim Lo Tekallel*, in Chap. 22. Ver. 27. are in the very middle of this Book. There are in *Leviticus* 10 Parscioths, 25 Sedarims, 859 Verses, 11902 Words, 44989 Letters, and these words, *Vehannozea bibesar*, in Chap. 15. Ver. 7. are the middle words. There are in *Numbers* 10 Parscioths, 33 Sedarims, 1288 Verses, 16707 Words, 62529 Letters, and these words, *Ve haia-is asher ebehar*, in Chap. 17. Ver. 5. are the middle words. There are in *Deuteronomy* 10 Parscioths, 31 Sedarims, 9055 Verses, 16394 Words, 54892 Letters, and the middle words of this Book are *ve Ascita Alpi Hadavar*, in Chap. 17. Ver. 10.

I now leave those who have the leisure to count whether this summing up of the letters in the Books of the Law be exact or no, we have already observ'd that the letters of *Genesis* which are set down at the end of the Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil* are not rightly counted, because there are onely 4395, whereas by this account there are many more. I have not found the letters of the other Books of the Bible any where counted, and perhaps they never were: However it is, this part of the *Massoret* is very inconsiderable, and if the *Jews* counted not otherwise the letters of the Hebrew Copy, they had no reason to call the *Massoret*, *Saieg la Tora*, *The fence of the Law*.

Besides, supposing they had counted all the letters of the Hebrew Text, and that we had that very account, we can thence conclude nothing but that they had counted the letters of their Copies, which would be of no use to other Copies, because the *Massorets* had not the true Originals. We ought therefore onely to be guided by the first Original, because, as we have already observ'd, Transcribers have took the liberty of adding and leaving out

Hieron.  
Quest. Hebr.  
in Gen.

out many letters according to their fancy, and therefore the counting of the letters of these Copies signifies nothing at all. To which we may add that the letters were also counted in the Greek and Latin Books, as we shall hereafter shew, and therefore there is nothing extraordinary or divine in the *Massoret* or Criticism of the *Jews*.

We ought for the same reasons not to look upon as an infallible rule the great exactness which the *Massorets* have observ'd in counting how many times the letters *Vau* and *Jod*, and others which are instead of Vowels, are in the Text: for example, how often such a word was writ with the letter *Vau*, or without it, which they call full or whole words, or words defective. They call those words whole which are writ with these ancient Vowels, and those defective which want them. This would be of some use, if the account had been made from the Originals, and not from incorrect Copies; besides the best Spanish Copies which I have seen agree neither amongst themselves nor with the *Massoret*.

I know that the *Jews* affirm that all the variations in other Copies ought to be govern'd by those of the *Massoret*. But they ought first to prove that the *Massoret* Copies are equal with the true Originals, and then we will believe them.

The Copies of the Hebrew Text differ'd very much in these sort of letters before the *Massoret* correction. Whence then could the *Massoret* Copy challenge this pretended infallibility? Every one agrees that they understood the Hebrew Tongue, and were well vers'd in the criticism of the Scripture; but this makes them not infallible. S. *Jerom*, in his Commentary upon *Isaiah*, observes that the Septuagint have translated a Hebrew word *The Kings*, whereas they ought to have translated *The Angels*. Then he adds that these Interpreters were mistaken by reason of the letter *Aleph*, that is to say, they read the Hebrew word without this letter, which yet was in his Hebrew Copy. But as S. *Jerom*'s Hebrew Copy ought not to prescribe the Interpreters, who went before him, so all other Copies ought not to be guided by the *Massoret* as by an infallible rule. Their Criticism serves onely to shew us the variations, and then we ought, according to the rules of Criticism, to examin which reading is best. We ought after the same manner to judge of the other *Massoret* rules. The *Aleph* in this place is superfluous, the *Vau* also and the *Jod* is likewise superfluous. We ought not to believe them, since they are some-

Hieron. in  
11. c. 14.

times mistaken, and that their observations agree not with the ancient Interpreters Copies.

Since *Buxtorf*, *Father Morin*, *Ludovicus Capellus*, and some other Authours have treated of the parts of the *Massoret*, I shall not spend time in reckoning of them up, but set down onely the most necessary things; at the same time making some reflections thereon, which will be of greater use than an unnecessary reckoning up of niceties. The *Massorets* have call'd the various readings in the Copies *Keri* and *Cetib*. *Keri* signifies the same as *ῥησις* amongst the Greek Grammarians. Where we find this word, which the letter *Koph* in the Margins of the Text denotes, there is a various reading, and according to the *Massorets* we ought not to follow that in the Text, which for this reason is call'd *Cetib writ*: but rather that in the Margin and which is *Keri* or *ῥησις* with the Greeks: I am not however of opinion that we ought always to follow the *Massoret* observation, especially when the *Massorets* agree not with the ancient Interpreters: But we ought to examin these various readings and keep that in the Text which makes the best sense. We may also correct the Text in many places where the *Massorets* have too scrupulously kept in the ancient reading, although they were convinc'd there were manifest errors of the Transcriber.

By following of this method we shall take away many of these *Keris* and *Cetibs* or various readings, instead of multiplying of them, as *Father Morin* and *Ludovicus Capellus* have done in several Editions of the Bible which they have consulted. When it is plain that the various reading proceeds from the Transcribers mistake, it is ridiculous then to keep the error in the Text and put the true reading in the Margin. The *Massorets* however have done thus in many places, but we ought not to imitate them herein, besides in reading of very good manuscript Copies, I have not found the third part of these *Keris* and *Cetibs* as in the *Massoret* Copy. As most of the *Jews* believe *Esdra*s was the Authour of the *Keris* and *Cetibs* they dare not correct some manifest errors in the Text which might easily be amended. Their scruple is very ill grounded, and we ought not to imitate them herein, but to correct according to the usual rules of Criticism the manifest errors of Transcribers, and to preserve onely the true variations, by putting what reading we think is best in the Text, and placing the other in the Margin.

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Thus we see whence proceed the *Keris* and *Cetibs* or various readings of the *Massoret* and how we ought to judge of them. We may argue the same upon what they call *Sevirin Conjectures*, because these conjectures are very often onely various readings confirm'd sometimes by the Copies of the ancient Interpreters: and herein the Jewish Criticism agrees with the ancient Translations.

There is yet another piece of superstition in the present Hebrew Copy for which the *Jews* have afterwards search'd out mysterious reasons according to their usual way: We find in some places of the Text little void spaces, where there are onely the points which we read with, but the words are left out. They are onely set down in the Margin with this observation *Keri velo Cetib*, that is to say we ought to read them although they are not writ. I have nevertheless in old Manuscripts found most of these words writ at length in the Text. Wherefore we ought without doubt to restore them, since they are necessary for the compleating of the sense, and that they have been left out onely through the superstition of the *Jews*. In matters of Criticism we ought not to rely upon the scruples of the *Jews*, who, under pretence of respecting the holy Scriptures, have introduc'd some ridiculous superstitions, as when they set down in the margin of the Text, *Cetib ve lo Keri*, to shew that what is writ ought not to be read.

The great zeal which the *Jews* shew for the preserving of the Text is very commendable, but when this zeal degenerates into superstition, Christians ought not to imitate them herein. Through respect to their Text they have retrench'd some words which they thought were undecent, and the reason why they yet print their Bibles thus, is because they affirm that the Prophets themselves left these words out of the Text as being undecent; we may however easily judge that this proceeded at first from some zealous Doctours, and that afterwards the Rabbins, who would authorise this alteration have ascrib'd it to *Esdra*s, or some other Writers inspired by God.

We ought to reckon amongst the Jewish superstitions some letters of the Text which are not writ as usually the others are, as those we call great because they are greater than the others, and those call'd little because they are less than the others. There are besides some said to be revers'd, and others hanging over according to their Figure. The *Jews* however give reasons for all

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these extravagancies, and although *Buxtorf* does not believe them, he nevertheless thinks that they had heretofore reasons for them which we at present are ignorant of. It is much more reasonable to say that these extraordinary letters were occasion'd by the Transcribers not writing equally all their letters, and through want of consideration some letters were greater and some less, some a little above the rest and others revers'd. What at the beginning perhaps hapned through chance, was in series of time look'd upon as mysterious by the *Jews*, who delight in inventing of cunning reasons for all things. It is also probable that they have designedly made some letters bigger than others at the beginning of Books; as the *Aleph* which is the first letter in the *Chronicles*, and the *Beth* at the beginning of *Genesis*. It is true these sort of letters are very ancient in the Hebrew Text, but the present *Jews* are not the onely ones who have search'd for mysteries in ridiculous niceties.

Without taking notice either of the *Massoret* or Jewish subtilities, we ought to write all the letters of the Hebrew Text equally and as they were in the beginning. The manuscript Copies which I have seen have not so many of these letters as the *Massoret*, and those letters which are above the rest are not so much above the others as in most of the printed Bibles, which shews that in the beginning it was onely a slight fault of the Transcribers, which has since been thought a mystery, and to make the mystery the greater, they have rais'd these letters yet higher above the others: the same thing may be said of the revers'd and other extraordinary letters; it is probable that some Heads of Schools or Universities, through too much subtilty, have invented these niceties, and that particular private persons have afterwards writ them in their Copies.

The Jewish Doctours, who have been Heads of famous Universities, have endeavour'd to make their Copies of the Bible as exact as they could, and the other *Jews* have regulated themselves by their Masters Copies; thus the greatest extravagancies imaginable, being back'd by the authority of some famous Doctours, might easily be communicated to the rest of the *Jews*. I wonder that any Christians can mind these dreams, and believe that a Hebrew Bible cannot be exact without being printed with all the superstitions we have already observ'd; what in the beginning was a fault became in length of time a perfection, and superstitious persons

persons have fancied that there was Religion in mistakes.

The same thing may be said of certain little points plac'd upon the top of some letters, which *S. Jerom* makes mention of, following herein the genius of the *Jews* of his time, as these Doctours studied always Allegories and the *Cabbal* they have invented many subtilties about their letters, and it has since hapned that what at first was but a pretty conceit afterwards became a great mystery. When things become ancient we generally admire them without considering the true rise of them.

*Omnia post obitum fingit majora vetustas.*

A Transcriber may perchance have let fall a drop of ink upon some letter, whereby he has made a point, a superstitious *Jew* coming after him, who is perswaded that whatsoever is in the Scripture is mysterious even to the least points, will not fail of inventing reasons for this pretended mystery: wherefore there is nothing more ridiculous than the Rabbins reasons for the explaining of the niceties we have already spoke of.

There is yet a more considerable sort of Criticism in the *Massoret*, which consists in certain void spaces which the *Massorets* have left, to mark as it were that the Text is defective and that we ought to add some words to compleat the sense. These void spaces are in good manuscript Copies as well as printed ones, but they all agree not exactly in it, and this makes me believe that the number of these spaces is not certain, and that it is generally grounded upon the conjecture onely of the Jewish Doctours who made the Criticism of the Text. Their rule in general is usefull, especially when we find these places fill'd up in the ancient Translations as is usual. We ought not however wholly to rely on the ancient Interpreters, and to believe that their Copies are the most perfect in those places, but we ought to examin whether all the ancient Translations agree in their supplement, and then this will be of some authority against the present Copies, otherwise we may say that Translatours have added them to their Copies, to make the sense more compleat, forasmuch as the Scripture style is very curt, and the Authours of the holy Scripture do not largely enough explain themselves.

We may reckon amongst the various readings another part of the *Massoret* which is called *Tikkun Sopherim* correction of Writers, and there are usually reckoned 18 of these corrections.

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If we examin them according to the rules of Criticism and not according to the prejudice of the *Jews*, as also of some *Christians*, we shall find that they are real variations which have been observ'd by some Jewish Doctours, so that we ought not to heed them who very improperly accuse the *Jews* of having designedly corrupted their Copies in those places. Although we know not these Criticks names nor the time when they lived, we cannot however deny but these corrections were made by *Jews* of authority. And this is the reason why the other *Jews* mention them in their Books. It is probable that these critical Observations were at first made by some famous Head of an University, and were since call'd *Correction of Writers* because they knew not the Authours name. As these corrections are not infallible we ought not wholly to rely upon them. Lastly, there is another sort of Criticism among the *Jews*, which they call *Itur Sopherim, Retrenching of Writers*, and this Criticism consists in five words, whence they affirm we ought to take away the letter *Vau* which is superfluous, but if we were to take away this letter which signifies *and* from all the places of the Hebrew Text where it seems to be superfluous, it might be left out in many other places. To conclude we are to observe that in speaking of the *Massorets* we have set down some critical Observations or various readings which cannot truly be ascribed to the *Massorets* who lived after the *Talmud*, since some of them are mention'd in the *Talmud*.

## CHAP. XXVII.

*Of the points and accents which are in the present Hebrew Copy of the Bible. When points were invented, and why the Caraites receive them. The Authority of the points and accents, their Rise. What we ought to believe of them.*

THE question concerning the points and accents in the present Hebrew Text of the Bible has been so learnedly treated of by several judicious Criticks that we need not spend much time

time hereupon, we need only read the Commentaries of *S. Jerom* to be perswaded that the points, which serve at present for vowels in the Hebrew Text, were not invented in his time, the *Jews* however commonly believe that *Esdra* and the Doctours of the great Assembly which was held under him were the inventours of points and accents, but they barely say it, without giving any solid reason for it. *Elias Levita*, the most learned Jewish Critick, and who particularly studied the *Massoret*, has made no scruple to oppose this common opinion of his Doctours. *Ludovicus Capellus*, a very learned and judicious Protestant, has fully treated of this Subject in a Book printed in *Holland*, under the title of *Arctanum Punctuacibus Revelatum*. *Buxtorf* the Son has made a Volume bigg enough indeed to answer *Capellus* his Book, but the little judgment which appears in his answer sufficiently shews the novelty of points.

As *Buxtorf*'s opinion agrees better with the Protestants Religion several of them have embraced it without examining of it, although *Luther*, *Zwingli* and *Calvin*, their Patriarchs, had before been of a contrary opinion. The Authour of the first French Translation made by those of *Geneva* from the Hebrew Text, shews the novelty of points by many arguments, and the most learned Protestants at present prefer *Capellus* his opinion before *Buxtorf*'s, as may be seen in the Prolegomenas to the English *Polyglott*.

They are only then heady and fancifull people who believe that points are as ancient as the Scripture Text, or that at least they were invented by *Esdra*. As the reading of the Bible depends in some sort upon these points, which serve at present instead of vowels, we cannot methinks say that the holy Scripture is intirely the Word of God, since part of it is of humane invention. The most zealous Protestants have look't upon this principle as dangerous and destructive to the very foundation of their Religion, but we ought not to judge of the truth of matter of fact by the evil consequences that may be thence drawn, especially when we have plain proofs of this matter of fact.

The Oriental Tongues had in the Beginning other vowels than these points, which serve at present instead of vowels, and we ought to judge of the Hebrew Tongue by the Arabian, Chaldee, and Syriack Tongues, which have other vowels besides these points as well as the Hebrew. But as these first vowels, which were

Levit. in  
Miss. barn.  
Mass.



were as ancient as the Tongues themselves, did not sufficiently limit the reading, there have since been certain marks called Points invented for the better fixing of it. In the reading S. Jerom's Commentaries on the Scripture we shall find what we here affirm concerning these ancient vowels of the Hebrew Text, by which the reading was regulated before the invention of these points.

The Arabians seem to be the first authors of these vowel-points and that the Jews afterward imitated them herein. We may then observe that the *Mahometans*, not agreeing how their *Alcoran* ought to be read, were oblig'd to invent certain figures or points for the fixing of their reading and avoiding of Schisms that might arise. The Arabians however agree not amongst themselves about the time when the Grammarians invented these points, but the most probable opinion is that this happened under *Omar* the third *Caliph*, and the History of a certain Arabian is hereupon alledged, who desired that he might have a person to teach him to read the *Alcoran*, and who read in a place that [God is retired from the Unbelievers and from his Prophet] whereas he ought to have read [The God is retired from the Unbelievers and his Prophet.] This variety of reading was occasion'd through the want of points, through default of which one vowel was easily mistaken for another, and if we do not mind the sense, the first Translation seems most natural and according to Grammar. The Jews have also some such stories amongst them, whence may easily be proved that the reading of the Scripture Text was very uncertain before the invention of points, however it be, this is certain that the *Mahometans* added points to their *Alcoran* but about *Omar's* time, and it may easily be proved that the Jews before that time had no Grammarians. To which we may add that the first Jewish Grammarians all writ in Arabick, and that they took from them the points and other parts of the Hebrew Grammar. But as we rest not always satisfied with first inventions the Jews very much increased the number of Arabian points, that they might more exactly observe the way of reading the Hebrew Bible, and these are the points which limit at present the reading of the Hebrew Text.

We ought however to observe that although men were the authors of the points, which serve instead of vowels in the Hebrew Text, the reading of this Text has not wholly depended on them.

them, because by the help of these points they have onely limited the reading, which was already receiv'd and authoriz'd by custom. Although there were then no points, and that the ancient vowels were not sufficient for the determining how we ought to read, the Scripture however was read among the Jews, especially the Law and some other Volumes, which were read in the Synagogues. *Origen*, as we have already observed, set down in his *Hexaples* the Hebrew Text of the Bible in Greek Characters. Unregulate then what points have now establish'd, and this use could proceed onely from ancient Tradition. The Jewish Doctors, who are usually thought to be those of the School of *Tiberias*, by the invention of points did nothing else but fix this ancient Tradition. And private persons, who presently understood the convenience of these points, added them to their Copies, but as it was hard to alter the Books which serv'd for publick use, these new points were not inserted into the Copies which were read in the Synagogue. Beside that the *Samaritans* had then no commerce with the Jews, and that these two Sects have always been enemies they have not received this novelty into their Copy.

Besides the reasons we have already alledged to shew that we ought not easily to neglect the points, because they are grounded on Tradition and long custom, there is yet another reason which is not ordinarily taken notice of. The Sect of the *Caraites*, which we shall hereafter speak of, reject all the false Traditions of the Jews as dreams, and yet receive the *Masoret* points, and follows the present reading as exactly as any other Sect do, which is a certain sign of the truth of Tradition concerning points. *Eudochius Capellus* does not do the Jews justice in rejecting the *Masoret* because they were the Authors of it, on the contrary we ought not to esteem it, if it came from any others, because we can easily learn to write or speak a Tongue from those who are used to write and speak it, and it is not probable that the *Masoret* have pointed the Books of the Law otherwise than they were at that time read in the Synagogues. It is true that Hebrew was then a dead Language, and not commonly they speak, but the Scripture for all that was read in the Synagogues and Schools. The Jews ought not to be suspected herein as they may be in matters of Faith. *Isaac Casaubon*, a learned Jew, who seems to stand contrary to the common opinion of his Doctors that the *Masoret* invented the points, says that they only fixed what had long been

Cap. lib. 6.  
Crit. ch. 4.

been received by Tradition. The Jews of *Tiberias* according to him read and distinguish't the Hebrew Text as *Esdra* and the Senatours of the great Assembly read and distinguish't it in their time. They onely differ in this that the latter have onely added points and accents for the more surely establishing what had been already agreed upon by the others.

Although this is true in general, yet we ought not to conclude that the *Massoret* pointing is infallible, this Tradition was not so certain but that some alteration happened according to the times and places before points were invented and even since they have been added to the Text. There have been some various readings and we may methinks point some places better, especially those which seem to be irregular; we ought however to do it with a great deal of caution; because these irregularities serve to prove that the *Massorets* have pointed according to the pronuñciation then in use. When we meet with these irregularities we ought to examin whether they proceed not from Transcribers, and then we may give that reading which seems to make the best sense.

In *S. Jerom's* time the Jews apply'd themselves to the reading and writing their Copies, as had been agreed upon by Tradition, this Father observes in his questions upon *Genesis* on Chap. 23 where the word [*Ephron*] is twice in one Verse; that the first is writ with the letter *Vau*, which serves instead of an *e*, and that the second is writ without the letter *Vau*, which agrees with the *Massoretical* writing, although *S. Jerom* pronouñces *Ephman* in the second place instead of *Ephron*. This observation of *S. Jerom* plainly shews that before the *Massorets* the Jews distinguished the words which we at present call entire or whole words, that is to say, those which are writ at length with their vowels from those which are called defective because they want the ancient vowels. The reason which *S. Jerom* gives for the different writing the same word plainly shews that the Jews hunted after mysteries even in niceties; he says that the *Vau* was taken out of the second *Ephron* after he had sold his Field, to shew that his virtue was not complete. We may then take notice that *S. Jerom* in his Book sets down onely what he had learnt from the Jews, who made mysteries where there were none.

His. prof.  
sup. pent.

*Abm Esra*, who could not allow of the ancient Jewish allegorical reasons, attributes these varieties to the Transcribers, who have often added or retouch't these ancient vowels according to their pleasure.

pleasure. But the Jews, who criticise upon every thing, having made that mysterious which happened onely by chance, have transcribed their Copies with more exactness, and the *Massorets* have mark't the words as they were writ, and they look on their rules to this day as infallible. If we consider the original of these varieties, and the uniformity which is at present in the Hebrew Copies, we shall be of another opinion. The *Massoret* was made onely by Copies which were faulty, and consequently we cannot look upon it as the first Original by which we ought to guide our selves.

We ought neither to regard the Jewish allegorical reasons concerning some irregular pointings, because they were invented by Doctours who were accustomed to be nice upon every thing, the better to shew the subtilty of their wit. These sort of reasons however have occasioned some irregular pointings to be left in the Hebrew Text which ought to be corrected. But as in all Tongues use does authorise several irregularities, we ought in the reading of the Hebrew Text to correct those onely which plainly appear to be the errors of the Transcriber, which the Jews have superstitiously preserved. If we consider some observations of the *Massoret*, we shall easily discover they have been occasioned by the ridiculous subtilties of the ancient Jews, and as this Work was not collected by the same Doctours nor at the same time we shall herein find some contradictions. Lastly, its being so hard to be understood has made the Jews so much neglect it that it is impossible wholly to restore it.

As for the accents which are at present in the Hebrew Text of the Bible we ought to judge of them as of the points. They were also invented by the *Massorets* or Jewish Criticks, who added them to the Text as points and commas have been put in the Greek and Latin Books, for the distinguishing the different parts of discourse, the Jews, who go beyond all other Nations in subtilties and niceties, invented not onely accents, to mark out the divisions, but have added others to denote the continuation of the discourse, as if one knew not sufficiently it ought to be continued when there is nothing set down to stop it. The Septuagint and other ancient Interpreters agree not always with the *Massorets* concerning these distinctions, and we are obliged to follow them onely where they make a right sense. If *Esdra* was the Author of them or that there had been a constant Tradition among the

the Jews from that time, the *Massoret* would not so often have differ'd from the ancient Interpreters. The Doctours of *Tiberias*, who are the authours of these accents as well as points, have set them down according to the receiv'd custom, especially in the Books of the Law, and in the other Volumes which are read in the Synagogues. This continuation of the reading of the Hebrew Text with some distinction whether it be in the Synagogues or Schools, deserves indeed our consideration but we ought not to make it an infallible rule. When in these matters we divide Tradition from Reason we easily fall into errors, we cannot however deny but that the *Massoret* distinctions are usually pretty exact, although, as we have already observ'd, they are not infallible.

We need not spend time here to shew the irregularities of the accents which the *Massorets* have added to the Text of the Bible. I shall only say that although the Rabbins desire to be thought ignorant of nothing which relates to them, they could not for all that ever find out the true reasons of these irregularities, and they have sometimes been obliged to confess their ignorance herein. In a word, if we followed these accents exactly as they are set down in several places, we should set down points and commas very improperly, and should make a great confusion in the Hebrew Text of the Bible. We have already observed that these same accents serve for pricks in singing, and therefore they accompany them with some gesture of the head. Lastly, I pass by several other observations which might be made upon the different uses of these accents that I may treat more largely of the distinctions of the verses in the Hebrew Text, which are also pointed by an accent called *Soph Pasuc*, End of the Verse, and which consists in two points placed one upon the other.

*CHAP.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

*Of the distinction of verses which are at present in the Hebrew Text of the Bible. Of some other distinctions of the same Text, with several illustrations on this Subject.*

BESIDES the accents which distinguish the Hebrew Text of the Bible as points and commas distinguish discourse in Greek, Latin and other European Languages, the Hebrews have another sort of accent which wholly cuts off the sense of the Text, and divides it into so many several verses. The Jewish Grammarians have called this accent *Silut Pause* or *Soph Pasuc*, End of the Verse, and they mark it with two points one upon the other. If it be true, as most of the Jews affirm, that there is no distinction in the Bible which proceeds not either from *Moses* or *Esdras*, we ought to have as much respect for this division as for the words of the Hebrew Text. The Interpreters ought not to have deviated at all from thence, and it would be downright impiety to change it in places where we think we can find a more proper sense.

But I am of opinion that it would be very superstitious blindly and without reason to submit to a thing which is purely the invention of Grammarians, whose rules cannot be infallible. The *Septuagint* and other ancient Greek Interpreters of the Bible, nay, even *S. Jerom* himself understood not this distinction of verses, which was invented by the *Massoret Jews*, who were, after the *Talmud*, as *Elias Levita* has affirmed, against the common opinion of his Doctours. There are none but ignorant Protestants who prefer this distinction of verses, invented by the *Massorets* before the other distinctions which are grounded upon good sense and the ancient Translations.

We ought then, with *Elias Levita*, to observe that the whole Law was heretofore as one may say but one verse, or in a manner but one word, because in those times there were no distinction of verses in the Books of *Moses* or in the other Books of the Bible. The Scripture agrees in this with all the Greek and Latin Books which were also writ without any distinction before the points and

*Elias Levit. M. f. bam. Mass. and in his Book of Accents.*

and commas were invented by Grammarians, the Cabbalistical Doctours amongst the *Jews* are of this opinion as also is Rabbi *Moses* Son of *Maimon*, and we ought not to reject it as a Cabbalistical Fiction, since we find it grounded on a constant custom among the same *Jews*, and which has always been continued from *Moses* till our time. I speak here of the custom they always observ'd of writing the Copies which were read in the Synagogues without these accents or distinctions. Although they read the Law in these manuscript Copies where there is no distinction of verses, they have however the pauses in places where they are mark't in the Books which private persons use, and where they have been introduc't onely for a greater conveniency.

I know they who affirm these accents are more ancient than the *Massoret* usually alledge the authority of the *Talmud* where they are mentioned, especially in the Treatises *Nedarim* and *Megilla*. The *Talmudist* Doctours ascribe the invention of accents to *Esdra*s and the great Synagogue or Assembly over which he presided, and they maintain their opinion by these words of *Nehemiah* 8. 8. *They read in the Book, in the Law of God distinctly [and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading]* according to their Interpreters by these words [*gave the sense*] the verses are signified, and by these other [*cause them to understand the reading*] the pauses of the accents are also denoted, and therefore there were in that time accents which distinguish't the Text into different verses. In another place of the *Talmud* it is expressly said there is no verse in the Law otherwise distinguish't than it was by *Moses* in the beginning when he received this Law from God, as if the Law had been read in *Moses* his time in the Assemblies as the *Jews* at present read it in their Synagogues; most of the Rabbins however do not believe *Moses* to be the author of the accents which have been inserted into the Text for the distinguishing the verses, but they onely say that *Esdra*s added them to the Text according to the Tradition he had received, and that he did nothing else but fix the Tradition which was derived from *Moses* to his time.

There seem'd at that time to be very great reason for the inserting these marks of distinction into the Text of the Law, because there was a necessity of expounding this Law to the people in a Tongue which they understood, and there was in the Synagogues, as we shall hereafter shew, one who read one verse of the Law.

Law in Hebrew, then the Interpreter explained that same verse to the people in Chaldee, which was their mother Tongue, then the Reader read another verse which the Interpreter again explained, and so on untill the reading was finish't; but we cannot from thence necessarily conclude that *Esdra*s put the accents here spoke of into the Text of the Bible, since the most learned *Jews* are of opinion that the Law was read in the Assemblies with the same distinction of verses before *Esdra*s his time, although they were not at that time invented, and therefore the same thing might be done under *Esdra*s and long after him without the assistance of these accents. We cannot shew them to be more ancient than the *Massorets* of *Tiberias*, who were after the *Talmud*, and besides they were invented onely for the conveniency of private persons who inserted them into their Bibles, whereas in the manuscript Copies dedicated to the use of the Synagogues, the ancient custom of writing without points or accents has always been observed.

We cannot however deny but the authours of these accents followed the custom of their times, and that they mark't them according to the reading then observ'd in the Synagogues of their Province, but this custom was not grounded on a constant Tradition, and which had never varied, since the Greek Septuagint and other ancient Translations, nay, even *S. Jerom's*, who made use of a learned *Jew* of the School of *Tiberias*, do not exactly observe it. Every one therefore in reading the Scripture Text, has the liberty of cutting off the sense or finishing the verses where he thinks the sense is best, without too scrupulously observing the *Massoret's* distinctions, from which we ought not however to deviate without good reason, because they are grounded upon a Tradition which is pretty authentick although not infallible.

Several *Jews*, whom *Aben Esra* makes mention of, have thought that they were not obliged to follow these *Massoret* distinctions, which they have sometimes corrected under pretence of finding out a better sense. He mentions amongst others *R. Moses Cohen*, a learned Grammarian, who took the liberty of joining some verses of the Bible otherwise than they were joined by those who had mark't them, affirming that they were mistaken in those places; the same *Aben Esra* and most of the other *Jews* allow a great deal to these accents, being perswaded that *Esdra*s was the Author of them, although *Aben Esra* seldom mentions him as such,

A a

and

Aben. Err.  
b. Habni.

Nehem. 8. 8.

Talm. Treat.  
Nedarim.  
Talm. Treat.  
Megilla.

and when he speaks of him makes use of a general term in calling him the Authour of the accents.

To proceed, we ought to take care of confounding the verses of the Greek and Latin Books, as they are explained by the ancient Authours, with these we are now speaking of. These last were invented onely for the more easie reading and explaining the Text of the Law and the rest of the holy Scripture, whereas the former mark't a certain number of words, and so by counting of the verses one knew exactly the largeness of each Volume. The Authours usually sum'd up at the end of their Books the verses they contained, to hinder any thing from being added or left out. Thus *Diogenes Laertius*, in the Lives of the Philosophers, makes us understand the Books of these Ancients by counting how many verses there were in them. *S. Jerom* speaks also after the same manner upon *Origen's* and some other Fathers Works, by saying they have so many verses in them, and what we ought chiefly to observe in relation to this Subject, is that he often mentions in his Prefaces and other places the verses of each Book of the Bible, as in his Preface to *Job* he observes that there are 7 or 800 verses wanting in the ancient Latin Translation of this Book. The Samaritans and Syrians count also these same verses at the end of each Book of the Scripture according to their way. Most of the Criticks, who have not sufficiently examin'd the nature and quality of these ancient verses, which the Greeks and Latins usually added to the end of their Books, have thought that the verses which were marked for the finishing of the sense, were long before *S. Jerom's* time: on the other side, as *S. Jerom* acknowledges himself to be the Authour of these last sort of verses, especially in the Books of the Prophecies, *Father Morin*, who has largely treated of this Subject, has caused a great deal of confusion by not distinguishing between these two sorts of verses, which differ very much one from the other.

*Fa. Morin  
in exerc.  
Sib.*

We may then observe that the Ancients call'd a verse what the Greeks call'd *σπυ*, and what we in our Language call a line; they measured the line by a certain number of words, and thus when they counted at the end of their Works how many verses they contained, at the same time one knew how many words there were in each Book. *S. Augustin*, in the collection he has made of some passages of Scripture, which he has called *Speculum*, often mentions these verses, and we may conclude from some which

*Aug. in Spec.*

which he sets down that there were but six words in each verse. *Father Morin*, who has not seriously consider'd this Work of *Saint Augustine's*, nor the Catalogue which he sets down of the verses, which the Ancients set to each Book of the Bible, concludes that *S. Jerom*, who according to him was the Authour of the distinction of verses, wholly disagrees herein with the *Massorets*. He thought that the verses mentioned in the Book of *S. Augustine* and in the Catalogue he gives, were the same which *S. Jerom* had invented, whereas it is plain that in those places the ancient verses, as they were mark't before *S. Jerom's* time, were spoken of. It is true that in the Book intituled *Speculum*, which is usually supposed to be *S. Augustine's*, the words of the Scripture are quoted according to *S. Jerom's* new Translation from the Hebrew, but whosoever made this reformation made no alteration as to the verses therein mark't according to the ancient method. This is also the reason why there are many more verses in the Catalogue we were just now speaking of than in that of *S. Jerom*, and if we compare the verses distinguish't by the *Massorets* with those of *S. Jerom* we shall find that this Father differs not so much from the *Massorets* as *Father Morin* pretends he does. We may moreover observe that the Divines of *Louvain*, who publish't a more correct Edition of *S. Augustin* than before was publish't, have left the Book we formerly spoke of, which he called *Speculum*, very confused. As they understood not what the word *versus* signifies throughout his whole Treatise they have set down, & post, *tertius versus*, & post, *secundus versus*, & post, *quartus versus*, & post, *quintus versus*, whereas we are necessarily to read in those places and in many others *post tres versus*, *post duos versus*, *post quatuor versus*, *post quinque versus*, &c. *S. Augustin* had no design to mark the 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th verses, but what immediately followed after 2, 3, 4 and 5 verses, as plainly appears in several other places of the same Book, where these words have been let alone as they ought to be writ in *S. Augustin's* Text.

If we never so little consider what we have already observed concerning the nature of the verses which the ancients usually marked at the end of their Books we shall easily conclude that all the praises which the *Jews* ascribe to the *Massoret*, as if *Moses* or at least *Esdras* had been the Authour of it, have been vain and superstitious. They did nothing herein but what other Nations had done long before them, and it is ridiculous to find some Chri-



stians at present, and especially amongst the Protestants, who respect the *Massoret* as if it came immediately from God, and who, with the *Jews*, affirm that it serves for a fence to the Scripture, because it has preserved it free and intire from all corruption; the Arabians have also such a like *Massoret* of their *Alcoran*, which was invented by the *Mahometan* Criticks, in imitation of the Greek and Latin Grammarians, and it is probable that the *Jews*, who lived amongst the *Mahometan* Arabians, borrowed it from them, whence it has since been communicated to the other *Jews*. We may however observe that by the *Massoret* verses which are at the end of each Book of the Bible, we cannot tell how many words there are in those Books, because they are not after the same manner of those other verses we have already spoke of, and they were invented onely after the way of reading the Books of the Law in their Synagogues, and they were found usefull for the setting out the places where we ought to stop in the reading. This hinders not but the *Jews* may have used the other verses which the Greeks call *σιγες*, and which in the beginning was nothing else but a line, as I have already observed. They call it also *sitta*, which signifies a line or row, as the Greek word *σιγες*, and the Latin one *versus*. The *Jews*, by the help of these verses or lines, could count in a trice how many letters there were in each Book of the Law. For each page or column of the Scroll on which they writ their Copies ought to contain such a number of lines, and in each line there were 30 letters, and therefore in a short time one might know how many letters were in the whole *Pentateuch*. There is therefore nothing divine in the *Massoret* of the *Jews*, but, as they excell in subtil niceties all other Nations of the World, they have added many trifles to their Criticism or *Massoret*, and at last, not knowing the original of this *Massoret*, they have had recourse, according to their usual custom, to Mount *Sinai*, and the great Assembly held under *Esdra*.

The words *sitta*, which the *Massorets* make use of, and *σιγες*, which the Greeks have taken from military Discipline, signifie onely a line or rank of letters, but they are sometimes made use of to signifie a rank or order of several lines whereof the verses and sections are composed. In this sense it is that *Hesychius* of *Jerusalem*, heretofore publish't a Book intituled *Σηχηςις ιβ Προφητων* [The distinction or division of the twelve Prophets into several Orders or Sections] which was observed in the holy Scriptures for  
illustra-

illustration sake, as the same *Hesychius* observes. This seems however to have been at first observed onely in the Book of *Job*, *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes* and the *Canticles*, because these five Books being composed in Verse, or at least in short Sentences, they have been writ by way of Verse. In effect I have found them writ in good manuscript Copies of the Bible by way of Verse separated one from the other, and it may be herein the Greeks imitated the *Jews* and called these Books *σηχηςις*, to distinguish them from others. S. *Cyril* of *Jerusalem* and S. *Epiphanius* mention <sup>Cyrii. ca-  
teck. 4.</sup> these five Books under the name of the five *σηχηςις*, and the latter adds unto them the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and the Book of *Jesus* the Son of *Sirac*. *Hesychius* without doubt thus divided the Books of the Prophecies in imitation of those other Books, which Saint *Jerom* affirms he was the first person that had divided the same Prophecies by distinguishing them into distinct verses, to conform himself to the Greek and Latin Grammarians, who had introduced these distinctions into the Works of the Oratours. *Nemo*, says this learned Father, *cum Prophetas videns, versibus esse descriptos metro eos existimet apud Hebraeos ligari, & aliquid simile habere de Psalmis & operibus Solomonis; sed quod in Demosthene & Tullio fieri solet, ut per cola scribantur & commata, qui utique prosa & non versibus conscripserunt, nos quoque utilitati legentium providentes interpretationem novam novo scribendi genere distinximus.*

The Jewish Criticks have herein gone beyond the Greeks and Latins, for besides the distinction of verses we have just now spoke of, they have other greater sections which make their Hebrew Copies of the Bible very clear. First they have great ones which they call *Parasciot* or divisions which are almost the same with our Chapters, with this difference onely, that they write not these *Parasciots* by way of Title as we at present do the Chapters in our Books. They leave onely a void space, and begin the Section with a line. In the printed Bibles these Chapters or Sections are marked with the letter P which is the first letter of the word *Parasca*, and they write three of them thus P P P; however in most of the good Manuscripts which I have read there is onely a void space left, and they begin the line without joining any letter by way of title. Others write the word *Parasca* in the Margin just over against the Section, to shew it is a new Section or Chapter, and they have called the Books of the Law by no other names than by those of these Sections, which divide it thorough-

throughout. For example, they call the first Section of *Genesis Bereshit*, because this Book begins with this word *Bereshit*: they reckon 53 of them in the *Pentateuch*, and they proportion them to the readings of the Books of the Law every Saturday in the year in their Synagogues.

Secondly, they have other less Sections, some of which they call *Peruhot* open, and others *Setumot* or closed, the first are mark't with the letter P and the others with a *Samech* or the letter S. I have seen some manuscript Copies where the Transcribers had writ at length by way of title and in other Characters *Peruha* and *Setuma*, and it is probable that in the beginning they called that *Peruha* or open Section when a void space was left and the line writ after; on the contrary that which was called the closed Section was when some void space was left but the writing was continued in the same line. I pass by many niceties concerning these little Sections, for example, how much void space ought to be left, for besides that this exactness seems to me to be superstitious, it is not observ'd either in the printed Books or in private persons Manuscripts, according to the strictness of the rules laid down by the Jewish Doctours on this Subject. These rules are exactly observed onely in the Copies designed for the Synagogues. R. *Moses* and several other Rabbins have treated at large hereupon in their abridgments of the *Talmud*, and they agree not amongst themselves concerning the void space to be left for the Section.

We may more truly say that the *Jews* in writing out of their Books have imitated the Greeks and Latins, who have divided the parts of their discourse into periods and other little Sections for the convenience of their Readers. The *Jews*, who make mystery of all things, have afterwards added many subtil niceties concerning the way of marking these Sections, which serve onely for ornament to their Copies, they have prohibited the writing of the canticles or compositions in verse the same way as prose is writ, but if we search never so little into the original of these Laws we shall find they were onely made by Criticks and Grammarians, who divided a discourse into several parts for the Reader's particular convenience, and the verses were in the beginning writ close one after another without being distinguish't more than the prose.

There

There is therefore nothing particular in all these distinctions in the present Hebrew Text, onely the *Jews* have magnified them when they search after mysteries. We may therefore with them call these lesser distinctions *sedarim* ranks or rows, and with the Greeks *σχημα*, as *Hesychius* of *Jerusalem* has termed them.

They at first onely mark't with points those places where they thought the sense was compleated, and as the sense ended not always alike, they invented several sorts of points which may be called *distinctiones* & *subdistinctiones*. *Cassiodore*, who has judiciously spoken of these divisions by points, affirms, that they very much illustrate the Scripture Text, and he adds that they were chiefly invented for the easing from time to time the Reader's mind. *Quas à majoribus nostris, sicut constat inventas, ut spiritus longa dictione fatigatus vires suas per spatia decreta resumere.* *Cassiodore* also above all things commends to those who would write the Scriptures the observing exactly these distinctions in imitation of S. *Jerom*, who was Authour of them, and the exact marking of the points in each Chapter, forasmuch as these points serve in some sort instead of explanation. *Ista siquidem positura seu puncta quasi quadam via sunt sensuum & lumina dictionum.*

To conclude, although *Cassiodore* makes mention of Chapters, we ought not for all that to imagin that the Bible was divided into Chapters as it is at present: all agree that Cardinal *Hugo* of the Order of S. *Dominic* was the first who invented this distinction of Chapters, for the fitting the Hebrew Text to the Concordance of the Bible, which he is also Authour of. This word Chapter in its original signifies nothing but a summary or an abridgment, and this the Greeks called *νοδδατορ*, and the Latins *Capitulum*; these Summaries or Chapters were placed before each Book, and were distinguish't by Letters or Cyphers, and these same Letters or Cyphers were also put into the Margin of the Text, just over against the place where a Section began, which was mark't with a point and a little void space that was left to shew the Section. We can find nothing that comes nigher the Jewish Sections, which we have already spoke of, than these sort of Sections which for a long time have been used in Greek and Latin Bibles, and which were writ out with great exactness, and therefore we may easily judge that the *Jews* as well as *Christians* are beholden to the Greek and Latin Grammarians for their distinctions in their Bibles. What was heretofore called Chapter was not any thing like to the Sections.

*Cass. de div. lec. cap. 13.*

tions or Chapters at present, but for the rendring of the Books more intelligible men thought of making little abridgments, and putting those abridgments or summaries, which the Greeks called *κατάλογα*, at the beginning of each Book. We may find examples hereof in the Edition of the New Testament in Greek printed at Venice in the year 1538. and in that of Robert Stephens, which was taken from the Manuscripts of the King's Library. Cassiodore calls these Chapters Titles, and they are sometimes confounded one with another, because both one and the other were onely summaries of what was contained in the Sections. There seems to be however the same difference between Title and Chapter as there is betwixt the general Title or Inscription of the Section and the Titles or more particular Summaries of the same Section, so that Title in relation to Chapters is the same as *ἡ τῆς*, which has been taken from the Latin word *Titulus*, is in relation to what the Greeks call *παρῆγορα*. But we have spoke enough concerning the distinction of Chapters, which we shall treat more particularly of in the second part of this Criticism, in explaining how the Books of the New Testament were heretofore divided.

## C H A P. XXIX.

*Of the Sect of the Jews called Caraites. The Caraites receive the 24 Books of the Bible, with the vowel-points and accents, as the other Jews do. Several illustrations relating to this Sect.*

SEVERAL Authours have spoke of the *Caraitic Jews* as if their Copies of the Bible differ'd much from the Hebrew Copies which the other *Jews* make use of, but those who have laid down this principle have never read their Books, where we plainly see that they have no other Copies of the Bible than the *Massoret*, they receive this *Massoret* as to its points and accents as *Aben Esrah* and *Elias Levita*, *Rabbinist Jews*, do, they look upon it as a well grounded Tradition, which has not depended upon the capricious fancies of mankind. As I have already spoke of this Sect,

Sect, which very few, either *Christians* or *Jews*, know much of, I shall speak onely here of what relates to the Hebrew Text of the Bible, that neither the *Jews* or *Christians* henceforward may do them injustice in this point.

*Carai*, according to *Elias Levita's* observation, signifies a man learned and well vers'd in the study of the Scripture, but this name, which in the beginning was a glorious one, among the *Jews*, is become opprobrious to them, since some, who despise Traditions, distinguish themselves from the body of the *Jews* by this word *Carai*, those of this new Sect pretended from thence to shew that they had more refined notions of Religion than the others, whom they accused of having in some sort left the word of God to follow the glosses of the Doctours, which the *Talmud* is full of, on the other side the *Jews* blamed them for being *Sadducees*, whom in effect they imitated in not receiving the Traditions of their Fathers. The little insight which the *Jews* always had either in History or Chronology, has in series of time occasioned these *Caraites* to be confounded with the ancient *Sadducees*, although they differ very much one from the other in matters of Faith.

*Scaliger*, who, in following the *Rabbinist Jews*, had also confounded the *Caraites* with the *Sadducees*, altered his opinion after he had learnt that the *Caraites*, who dwelt at *Constantinople*, differed onely from the other *Jews* in this that they were more exact than they in obeying the Commandments of the Law, and that they refused to submit to their Traditions. But *Scaliger* is mistaken in affirming, without any reason, that the *Caraites* are more ancient than the *Sadducees*, and besides that the *Nazareans*, whom *S. Jerom* mentions in speaking of their Gospel which he had translated, were real *Caraites* who professed Christianity. Let us leave these ill grounded conjectures of *Scaliger* and see what were the real opinions of this Sect, which is at present a great abomination to the other *Jews*.

The *Caraites* agree in the fundamental points of Religion with the other *Jews* and differ onely in some points of Discipline and Traditions. Some modern *Jews*, who have more thoroughly examined their opinions, have distinguish't them from the *Sadducees*, as appears by the Book *Juhasin*, which is a collection of several other Books where the Genealogies and several other Histories of the *Jews* are spoke of. The Rabbin who composed this

Work affirms for certain that the *Sadducees* are not the same with the present *Caraites*, infomuch as they at present acknowledge the reward of good Works and the punishment for the evil in the other World; and lastly the resurrection of Bodies, which is clear contrary to the Doctrine of the *Sadducees*.

Their Books are full of curious Maximes concerning the spirituality of Angels and the immortality of the Soul, their Faith is more refin'd and less superstitious than that of the Rabbinist *Jews*. *Leon of Modena*, a Venecian Rabbin, who was also perswaded of this truth, has made two sort of *Caraites* for the reconciling the common opinion of the *Jews* with what we find by experience. He affirms that the *Caraites* at present are reformed and that they might not be hated by all the other Religions of the world they have quitted the old opinions of the *Sadducees*. This is the reason they believe the immortality of the Soul, Paradise, Hell and Purgatory, and lastly for the better agreeing with the other *Jews* they have received some of their most ancient Traditions, although they were in the beginning real *Sadducees*.

This opinion of *Leon of Modena* concerning the *Caraites* seems to be reasonable enough, but as he has no proofs hereof he seems onely to have had a design to cover the ignorance of his Doctours. He does the *Caraites* wrong when he says they receive nothing of the Scripture but the *Pentateuch*, wherein he very improperly confounds them with the *Samaritans*. It may very well be that the *Sadducees* opinions concerning Traditions occasioned the Authours of *Caraim* to separate themselves from the body of the other *Jews*, especially when Traditions encreased so fast as to make pleasant stories pass for real Traditions. I am however of opinion that it cannot be proved that the *Caraites* were ever *Sadducees*, we have no more reason to confound the *Caraites* with the *Sadducees*, than with the *Samaritans*, as indeed the *Jews* sometimes call them *Samaritans*, whence they afterwards believed they received onely the 5 Books of *Moses* as the *Samaritans* did; and as all these three Sects rejected all the other *Jews* Traditions, they have been supposed to have been of the same principles, and the *Jews*, either through ignorance or malice, have cast many things upon them which might easily be confuted.

If we read the Histories writ by the Rabbins we shall find that those who speak most exactly make *Caraim* to have begun but in the eighth Century. They make a certain *Jew* called *Anan*, of the

the Family of *David*, to be the Authour of this new Sect, who lived in the second generation of Doctours, whom they call *Geonim*, or Excellent, and consequently since the composing of the *Talmud* about the middle of the eighth Century. This Rabbin, not being raised to the dignity of *Hannaschi*, or Chief, and not being able to attain the quality of *Geon*, or Excellent, opposed the Doctrine of the *Talmudists* and their decisions, which were grounded onely upon the glosses of their Fathers and not upon the word of God. He had some followers, and afterwards composed some Books against the other *Jews*, who called them *Sadducees*, because they renewed this ancient Sect in the point of Tradition, wherefore he was excommunicated and condemned by the Jewish Senate as a follower of the *Sadducees*, whose party was then very low, according to the observation of *R. David Ganz*. They called the *Caraites* *Sadducees*, as we call several Hereticks *Simonians*, because they are imitators of *Simon Magus*.

There were not then two sort of *Caraites*, as *Leon of Modena* affirms, but onely those who arose after the collection of the *Talmud*, and after the Jewish *Massorets* had put points and accents into the Scripture Text, and this is the reason why the *Caraites* receive not onely the 24 Books of the Scripture, but also the points and accents invented by the Doctours of *Tiberias*. At the time when they separated themselves from the rest of the *Jews* the *Massoret* was already authorised, and they were not of opinion that it ought to be rejected, because it was not one of those ill grounded Traditions. *Selden*, who has read some of the *Caraites* Works, affirms that they receive no Tradition at all, if we take this word Tradition according to the rigour of the sense, although they receive the Expositions of their Fathers, which have been derived to them without interruption; but to me this seems too nice, for it is certain that the *Caraites* reject the other *Jews* Traditions onely because they believe them not to be true ones. *Aaron*, a *Caraites* *Jew*, rejects onely such, and besides the Authour of the Book intituled *Cozri*, who understood the *Caraites* opinions better than any other Rabbinist *Jew*, affirms that the *Caraites* allow of the Tradition concerning the points and accents of the Hebrew Text, whence he seems to infer that they ought to acknowledge the other Traditions concerning the exposition of the Scripture.

As the *Caraites* set up Reason for one of the principles of their Religion, they carefully examin the Scripture Text, and what we call Tradition, which are the other two grounds upon which they build. We may say that they receive Scripture and Tradition as well as the other *Jews*, but they always call their Reason to their assistance, which judges whether the consequences drawn from the Scripture do naturally follow, and whether what we call Tradition is really so, and has never been interrupted, this they call a constant and in a manner hereditary Tradition. Although they all agree in their Principles in general, they however differ in the applying these Principles, and the modern *Caraites* sometimes differ from the ancient ones. I have observed this liberty of opinion in reading the Commentary of *Aaron*, a *Caraites*, upon the *Pentateuch*. It is impossible for men, who rely so much upon Reason in matters of Religion, not to be divided amongst themselves. On the other side we cannot blame them for not believing so easily all Traditions, especially those of the Rabbiniſt and Talmudiſt *Jews*, most of which have no foundation at all. I shall not here stay to expound particularly the *Caraites* opinions, and wherein they differ from the other Rabbiniſt *Jews*, but onely what relates to their belief concerning the holy Scriptures.

Aaron Car.  
in 1794.

There is no doubt but the *Caraites* receive, as I have already observed, all the Books of the Bible as the other Rabbiniſt *Jews* do: *Aaron*, Son of *Joſeph*, a famous *Caraites* Jew, who has writ ſeveral Books, and amongst others a learned Commentary on the Law, makes mention, in the Preface to this Commentary, of the 24 Books of the Bible, which are authentick among those of his Sect as well as amongst the other *Jews*. This ſame Authour carefully inquires into the literal ſenſe of the Text, he keeps cloſely to the points and accents which are in the *Maſſoret* Copy. When he gives any reaſon for the ſenſe which he prefers, he has often recourſe to Grammar, and then he mentions the great *Patach*, the little *Patach*, the *Holem*, the *Saruc*, the *Sceva*, the *Hateph*, *Kames*, and all the other niceties in this Art. He ſpeaks alſo of the Accents, and he ſometimes quotes the Authours of the *Maſſoret*, whoſe Judgment he very much values, when he finds any various readings. In a word, this *Caraites* follows the *Maſſoret* as exactly as the other Rabbiniſt Jewish Grammarians. *Hottinger* is miſtaken when he makes the *Caraites* to have other Copies.

Copies of the Bible than what are uſed by the other *Jews*. Several other Writers have alſo fallen into the ſame miſtake, and have given their opinion very freely in a matter they underſtood not. It is true that they ſometimes in their Commentaries quote the Scripture Text otherwiſe than it is in it ſelf, and they often ſet down the Hebrew words at length with all their vowels, but theſe quotations are rather explanations of the Text than the Text it ſelf, and it is enough that they themſelves own that they have no other Copies than thoſe of the other *Jews*. Beſides their Schiſm is onely as to Traditions and not to the Scripture Text, which they have always preſerved as it was at their Separation.

*Buxtorf* the Son, as learned as he was in the reading of the Jewish Books, is alſo miſtaken in the *Caraites*, for he ſays that heretofore they differed among themſelves not onely in the explanation of ſome paſſages of the Scripture, but alſo in the reading of the Text, and that this difference betwixt them was very conſiderable, becauſe in rejecting of Traditions they reſuſed alſo to receive the Points which are reckoned alſo among Traditions. But *Aaron* the *Caraites* ſays clear contrary and affirms that they onely reject the ill grounded Traditions, beſides we find by experience that they allow the *Maſſoret*s points and accents. I know that Father *Morin* in explaining a paſſage of the *Cozri* affirms that the *Caraites* thought that the points were of Divine Authority, and therefore they received no Tradition. But he gives no proof hereof, and on the contrary it is certain that the *Caraites* are of the ſame opinion as *Aben Eſra* concerning the *Maſſoret* points and accents, as I have obſerved in reading of the Commentaries of Rabbi *Aaron*, a *Caraites* Jew.

Buxt. de  
antiquit.  
Punt.

The Authour of the Book intituled *Cozri* affirms that the Law was given to *Mofes* without points and accents as it is read in the Synagogues, then he adds, that if there has been need of ſo many Traditions about points and accents, and other things which relate onely to the pure Text of the Scripture, for the preſerving of this Text, theſe Traditions are much more neceſſary for the explanation of the matters therein contained. This Authour would from thence prove that the *Caraites*, having received the Tradition of points and accents, ought not to reſuſe the Traditions concerning the expoſition of the Text, and therefore he clearly ſuppoſes that the *Caraites* have no other Copies of the Bible



Bible than those which the Rabbinist or Talmudist *Jews* make use of. Rabbi *Muscato*, in his Commentary upon the *Cozri*, understood not the force of this Argument when he says that the *Caraites* reject the Tradition concerning the way of reading the Hebrew Text, and this has caused *Buxtorf* to mistake, who ought not in so great an affair to have relied upon the authority of a Rabbin for fear of falling into the same error. Let us now see more particularly how the *Caraites* explain the Scripture.

*Aaron* the *Caraites* is so far from unnecessary multiplying the various readings of the Hebrew Text, that he allows not of the allegories and quirks which some Rabbinist *Jews* have invented for the finding out new senses. He observes in the beginning of *Genesis* that there are some Rabbins who read *Bada finxit* or *mentitus est* instead of *Bara creavit*, by changing the *Resch* into *Daleth*, by reason of the likeness of these two letters, which extravagancy he condemns. He condemns also those who divide *Bohu* into two words, as if we read *Bo Hu*, and he likewise rejects all the various readings which some introduce into the Scripture for the forming of a sense according to their fancy, receiving no other but such as make the best sense: he does not for all that say that we ought to change any thing in the Hebrew Text, because this liberty very often proceeds from the genius of the Hebrew Tongue, and not from the variety of Copies. The Jewish Interpreters often change one letter for another to find out the sense, although they make no alteration in the Text. This may proceed from something more ancient, because the ancient Transcribers, as we have already observed, were not very exact, so that we have the liberty at present, for the explanation of the Text, to have recourse to these alterations.

The same *Caraites* Authour likewise nicely observes all the subtilties of Grammar, and often makes use of the authority of the Rabbinist Grammarians. He observes when one word is writ with one point rather than with another, because that helps to find out the sense. He says for example that the word *Helbehen*, in Chap. 4. *Gen.* V. 4. is writ with a *Tzeri* under the *Beth*, whence he concludes that it is in the plural number, although the letter *Jod*, which usually makes the plural number, is wanting. In speaking of the word *Laielah* he observes that the final *He* is added by reason of the accent, and that it belongs not to the body of the word.

To

To conclude, I would not have staid upon these niceties of Grammar, but that I thought it was necessary to convince the world that the *Caraites* as well as the other *Jews* follow exactly the *Massoret* Copies, and this we are to suppose as a certain truth it being needless for me to produce any more proofs. They laugh indeed at most of the Traditions of the *Jews*, whom they call *A People of Tradition*, but they receive without any scruple the points and accents invented by the *Massoret Jews*, and all other Traditions which seem to them to be reasonable and well grounded.

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CHAP.

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## C H A P. XXX.

*The original of Grammar among the Jews, What time it began. Its progress. A Catalogue of the most famous Jewish Grammarians.*

**A**fter the Jews of Tiberias had added points and accents to the Text of the Bible, the Doctours of other Schools began to imitate them. They put these points and accents into their Copies, which private persons afterwards writ out for their conveniency. They observed at that time Tradition onely, because the Art was not yet invented for the prescribing of Rules how to mark the points. But the Arabians having made Grammars for the perfecting their Tongue, the Jewish Doctours, who lived in places where Arabick was spoke, made also Hebrew Grammars in imitation of them, and this is the reason why the first Jewish Grammarians writ their Books in Arabick, and the Rabbins, who since that time have writ Grammars in Rabbinical Hebrew, have hardly done any thing else but translated the Arabick words into another Tongue. *Isaac Levita* was so thoroughly perswaded hereof that he sometimes goes up to the first Jewish Grammarians for the better understanding the propriety of the terms in the Hebrew Grammar. He affirms for example, that the first Grammarians did not write the word *Sceva* with a *Vau* as it is at present writ, but with a *Beth*, and that it comes from *Scon*, to reduce, being the same with *Giesma* in Arabick. Father *Morin* has also given several other examples to shew how the Hebrew and Arabick agree, thereby to prove that the Jews borrowed their Grammar from the Arabians, and there may many more be produced. But there is no necessity of our staying longer on this Subject, besides that we shall hereafter find that the Jews have wholly imitated the Arabian Grammarians in their method. I shall onely set down here the time when the Grammar began among the Jews.

Some Authours have fancied that the Hebrew Grammar is not above 600 years old, and they ground their opinion on the authority of the Jews, who usually say that Rabbi *Juda Hing* of Fez was the first Grammarian. There is also in the Book intituled

intituled *Juhasin* that this Rabbin restored the Hebrew Tongue to its purity after those who were in exile had wholly lost it. *Elias Levita* also affirms that there was no Grammar among those of his Nation before R. *Juda*, to whom succeeded R. *Jona* and R. *Saadias Gaon*, but he is mistaken, forasmuch as *Saadias Gaon* is ancients than Rabbi *Juda*, and consequently the Hebrew Grammar was long before him.

Father *Morin*, who followed the common opinion, has in the second part of his Exercitations upon the Bible changed his mind, after having read a manuscript Catalogue of Jewish Grammarians, where *Saadias* is the first and not *Juda Hing*. He has however much ado to reconcile the title of this Catalogue with the Catalogue it self, for in the title the Authour says he intends to reckon up all the Jewish Grammarians from R. *Juda Hing* to his time, that is to say for 730 years ago, and yet in his Catalogue he places *Saadias Gaon* the first of all, and R. *Juda* but in the sixth place. It is probable that the title of this Catalogue was made by some one who was of the common opinion concerning the original of the Jewish Grammar. However it be, it is plain by this Catalogue that the Jews used a Grammar towards the end of the ninth Century or the beginning of the tenth, since it was writ in 1600 and comprehends 730 years, which answers well enough the time *Saadias Gaon* lived in, who was Head of a School in the Territories of *Babylon*, in the year 927 and his Books seem to shew that they had at that time some knowledge of Grammar.

We ought however to acknowledge that the Grammarians of that time were not very understanding and that they could not shake off some Cabbalistical subtillies and other quirks, which they spent their whole time in. They understood not the art of Criticisme which agrees not with the study of Allegories, which were then much esteemed. Wherefore these first Jewish Grammarians Books have been neglected as having neither art or method. This seems to be the reason why R. *Juda Hing* is called the first Grammarian, because he is in effect the first who has methodically and with any ingenuity treated on this Subject. This may also be the reason why this Rabbin calls the Grammarians Works that went before him Songs and Parables inasmuch as they were obscure and writ in a didactical style. We shall here give an abridgment of the manuscript Catalogue which we just now spoke

of; because Father *Morin* has onely given some extracts thereof, and we shall at the same time add some necessary reflections of the rise and progress of Grammar among the Jews.

“ *Saadias Haggaoon* or the most excellent of *Phitume* has composed the Book of Collection, the Book of the Hebrew Tongue, and a Book of Rhetorick. After him follows an anonymous Authour of *Jerusalem*, who composed 8 Books *shining as Saphires*. The third is *R. Adonim Bentamim* of *Babylon*, who has also made a Collection. The fourth *R. Juda Ben Karis*, who has writ a Book on the same Subject. The fifth *R. Menahem Ben Saruk*, a Spaniard, who has also writ a Book. The sixth *R. Adonim Levite* surnamed *Labrat*, an Arabian of *Fez*, who composed several Books on the same Subject. The seventh *R. Juda Hing* of *Fez*, who excelled all the other Grammarians that went before him, and writ four Books of Grammar. The eighth *R. Jona* of *Cordova*, called *Ben Gana*, who made seven Books, the seventh whereof was a Dictionary. The ninth *R. Scelomo Ben Gavriol*. The tenth *R. Samuel Hanagid* of *Cordova*, who writ a Book call'd *Richesse*. The eleventh *Moses Cohen*, a Spaniard, call'd *Gekatilia* of *Cordova*, who added several things to the Grammar, which they who went before him understood nothing of. The twelfth *David*, a Spaniard of *Granada*, who writ a Book intituled *the Kings*. The thirteenth *R. Juda Ben Bileam* of *Toledo*, who made some Books of Grammar. The fourteenth *R. Isaac* surnamed *Jasus*, who writ a Book intituled *Links*. The fifteenth *R. Levi* surnamed *Attaban* of *Saragosa*, who made a Book call'd *the Key*. The sixteenth *R. Abraham Ben Esra*, a Spaniard, who excelled all the others both in number of Books and understanding. The seventeenth *R. Jacob Ben Eleazar*, who composed several Books of Grammar, one of which is called *the Compleat*. The eighteenth *R. Scelomo Ben R. Abraham*, who made a Dictionary. The nineteenth *Joseph Kimhi*, a Spaniard, who writ several Books. The twentieth *Moses Kimhi*, the Son of this *Joseph*, who composed a Book call'd *the Introduction to Science*. The twenty first *R. David Kimhi*, Brother of *Moses*, who composed the *Miclol* or a Commentary, with a Dictionary also. The twenty second *R. Joseph Ben Caspi*, who made a Book call'd *Chains of Silver*. The twenty third *R. Moses Ben Hannefcia*, who also made a Dictionary. The twenty fourth *R. Joseph*,  
“ who

“ who writ a Book call'd *Authour of the Tongue*. The twenty fifth *R. Scenuel*, an excellent Grammarian, who composed several Books of Grammar. The twenty sixth the most wise *R. Isaac* Son of *R. Moses*, which *Isaac* is the Authour of a Book call'd *the Work of the Ephod*. The twenty seventh *R. Joseph Ben Jehaia*, who writ several Books of Grammar. The twenty eighth an anonymous Authour of the Book intituled *the Gate of Tongues*. The twenty ninth *R. David Ben Jehaia*, a Spaniard, who writ a Book call'd *the Tongue of the learned*. The thirtieth the wise Philosopher *R. Abraham Balmes*, who is the Authour of a Book call'd *Possession of Abraham*. The thirty first *R. Joseph*, Authour of a book call'd *the Master of Verbs*. The thirty second *R. Samaria*, who writ several Books of Grammar. The thirty third *R. Scelomo Scaruit*, Authour of a Book call'd *Desire of Solomon*. The thirty fourth *Elias Levita*, a German Grammarian, who writ several Books. The thirty fifth *R. Scelomo Ben R. Jacob Amoli*, who writ a Book of Grammar, and a Dictionary call'd *Terminated Chains*. The thirty sixth *R. Tam Ben Jehaia*, a great Doctour and learned as well in the Arts as in the Tongues, and who has excellently explained the Roots of the Hebrew Tongue. The thirty seventh *R. Elisa Ben R. Matathia*, who composed a Book call'd *the Buckler of David*. The thirty eighth *R. Emanuel*, Authour of  
“ a Book call'd *Augmentation of Grace*.

We may plainly see by this Catalogue that the first Jewish Grammarians were born in Countries where they spoke Arabick, whether in *Babylon*, *Jerusalem*, in *Africa*, in *Andalusia*, in *Spain*. Their Works were first writ in Arabick and then translated into Rabbinical Hebrew. In all the search I have made I have found it impossible to find any of these Books more ancient than *R. Juda Hing*. Those that went before him have been neglected, because they were neither methodical nor exact. *Aben Esra* however, who has also given us a Catalogue of the Jewish Grammarians which were before him, mentions the Books of *R. Saadias Gaon* upon this Subject, and these same Books are quoted by other Jews; but his Commentaries on the Scripture, and some other Works which we have of his at present, sufficiently shew that he was no great Grammarian, and that he had not much studied Criticism. His way of explaining several words of the Prophecy of *Daniel* after the letter, sufficiently shew that he

was full of ridiculous Cabbalistical subtillies. For example, in the Chapter where we read *Pat-Bag* he makes use of the *Cabbal* called *Gematrie* in changing the letter *Gimel* into *Kesch*, as if it was *Pat-Bar*, a pure food. He explains after the same manner the proper name *Avednego*, as if it was read *Avednebo*, by changing the *Gimel* into *Beth*. He also changeth another way the *Zain* into *Tzaddi*, *Aleph* into *Ain*, *Beth* into *Mem*, and several other letters. Most of the Etymologies he gives are childish and have no foundation: instead of attributing to Transcribers the want of some letters which heretofore served instead of vowels, he flies out into allegorical reasons, as when he says the word *Nebuchadnezer* in the 2d Chapter of *Daniel* is writ without an *Aleph* because it had been that day determin'd there should be no more Kingdom in *Babylon*. Thus we see what reflections he makes upon the *Massoret*. He has also writ a Commentary on the Book of the Creation which is ascribed unto *Abraham*, and we find nothing but quirks and Cabbalistical fictions upon the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet.

We may then conclude that before R. *Juda Hing*, who lived, according to the Rabbins computation, at the beginning of the eleventh Century, the *Jews* understood not the art of Grammar, although several of them before writ upon that Subject. This makes R. *David Kimhi* say that before R. *Juda's* time the Hebrew Tongue was very confus'd, and that this Rabbin was the first who endeavoured to clear this confusion, wherefore he calls him the chief of the Doctors who have refin'd the Language. In word, if we compare the ancient pronunciation of the Hebrew with that at present we shall find them very different, and I doubt not but the Jewish Grammarians, who went according to the Arabian Grammar, have introduced many alterations both in the pronunciation and writing of the Hebrew. The means by which this Tongue has been restored are not so sure but that we find a great deal of incertitude in it. Wherefore that we may the better judge hereof, I thought it was necessary more particularly to examine the Jewish Grammarians Books thereby to shew the uncertainty of the Hebrew Tongue.

## C H A P. XXXI.

*The History of the Jewish Grammarians, with the examination of their Books. Whence we may know the rise and progress of the Hebrew Grammar, as also its uncertainty.*

**A**Lthough in the Septuagint and other ancient Interpreters time there was a certain method of explaining the Hebrew Text of the Bible, there was however no Grammar reduced into art. The Rabbins pretend to have a greater advantage herein than the former *Jews*, because they are able by this means to make several reflections upon the Hebrew Tongue which their predecessors knew nothing of. But on the other side the rules prescribed by these Grammarians are sometimes so subtil and uncertain that I should in many places prefer the method of the Ancients before these rules. This we shall more easily know by the examination we are about to make of their Books.

The Authour of the manuscript Copy which we before mentioned makes R. *Juda Hing* to be the Authour of four Books of Grammar whose Titles he sets down. R. *David Kimhi* speaks onely of two, and in a Preface to R. *Jona's* Grammar it is said that R. *Moses*, Son of R. *Samuel Cohen Gekatilia*, translated two of R. *Juda's* Books of Grammar out of Arabick into Hebrew. I have read a manuscript Grammar of this Rabbins wherein he wholly imitates the Arabian Grammarians method, and he says at first that his design is onely to speak of the letters called *Hidden*, and those which have been added, which he calls in Hebrew *Otiocasserer*, *Vehammoseec*, *litteras occultationis & protractionis*. The greatest secret of the Hebrew Tongue consists in how to distinguish these sorts of letters and to mark exactly those which belong to the body of words and those which do not. Now as they are sometimes hidden either in pronunciation or in their way of being writ, because the Transcribers have sometimes left them out, R. *Juda* gives us in his Book some rules for the discovery of them. These rules belong chiefly to the letters *Eui*, that is to say, to *Aleph*, *Vau* and *Jod*, which are

are easily suppress'd or changed one for the other, and then unless we have understanding enough to find them out we fall into errors. R. *Juda* affirms that few persons understand the secret of these letters, and herein he blames the ignorance of those Grammarians that went before him. He accuses an excellent Grammarian of his time who could not reduce words to their roots because he understood not these rules. But all these rules and several others which have been invented since him on the same Subject, hinder not the Rabbin Grammarians from the disputing at present about the root of many words, and consequently about their true signification; their rules are not always certain, and besides the Hebrew Copies they use differ from the ancient ones in many places, which renders the reading of the Text very uncertain.

The same Rabbin places the letter *He* when it is in the end of words amongst those which are called *quiescentes* or *silent*, and he adds that it is then set down instead of *Aleph*. This Rule has its rise from the ancient *Jews*, who confounded the *Aleph* with *He* after their return from *Babylon*. The Chaldee which became their mother Tongue usually employs this letter *Aleph* in the end of words. I have found in reading very good manuscript Copies of the Bible that the ancient Transcribers oftner confounded these two letters than they are in the printed Copies.

To proceed R. *Juda* imitates the Arabian Grammarians in laying down for a foundation of reading onely the three letters *Aleph*, *Vau* and *Fod*, which the *Jews* for this reason call *matres lectionis*. These letters served instead of vowels before the *Jews* of *Tiberias* had invented points, and the Arabians at present have onely three points which answer these three ancient vowels. But the *Jews* have invented many more for the better marking the different pronunciations, which have not been sufficiently distinguish'd by the Arabians.

The Jewish Grammarians seem however to have too much limited these ancient vowels, since S. *Jerom* calls not onely *Aleph*, *Vau* and *Fod* vowels, but also *He*, *Heth* and *Ain*, as the *Jews* of his time did.

The same R. *Juda* has observed that these letters which we call ancient vowels are sometimes lost, and then they are supplied by a point call'd a *dagesc*, which shews they are wanting, and

and that of two words we are to make but one, which was no doubt taken from the Arabians, with this difference onely, that the Arabians change onely the pronounciation and not the way of writing, whereas the *Jews* change both the one and the other, which oftentimes occasions various readings in the Hebrew Text.

He moreover adds this other rule of Grammar that the Hebrews are used to change the *Aleph* into *He*, and for this reason they have written *Eshabbar* with an *Aleph* instead of *Hishabbar* with an *He*. *Egealli* with an *Aleph* instead of *Higealli* with an *He*. *Estolalu* with an *Aleph* instead of *Histolalu* with an *He*. And *Ascem* with an *Aleph* instead of *Hascem* with an *He*. He gives in the same place several other examples of this alteration which is usual enough in Scripture, and can onely proceed from Transcribers, who have confounded these two letters by reason of their being pronounced alike, especially when the *Jews* at their return from Captivity spoke Chaldee. He gives also examples where *Aleph* is taken for *He* at the end of words, but we need not stand any longer hereupon, it is enough to have observed in general the method of this Rabbin's Grammar, to clear as much as possible this great confusion of letters which are put down one for the other in the Hebrew Text. It perhaps would have been better to have corrected this Text, and to have restored the ancient reading according to the genius of the Hebrew Tongue. It is certain that the first Authours of the holy Scriptures, who writ before the Captivity, spoke pure Hebrew and not Chaldee, and therefore what R. *Juda* and some Grammarians after him have called alteration of letters, is rather for the most part an error of the Transcriber than an alteration peculiar to the Hebrew Tongue.

Besides these alterations he gives examples of the letter *Fod* being changed into *Aleph*, *Vau* into *Aleph*, *Vau* into *He*, and several such like, then he examines the Verbs which begin with these sort of letters, and he explains all the different cases where this may happen, he gives reasons for the pointing, and why one thing is pronounced and another not. He wholly follows the Arabian Grammarians method in explaining the changing of the letters *e*, *u* and *i* one for another, that is to say *Aleph*, *Vau* and *Fod*. If he finds any irregularity in pointing he exactly marks it by giving the place of Scripture where it is, and that we may not

Chr. n. 20.  
34.  
112. 68.  
Pl. 1. 76.  
Jer. 25.



not be deceived he reduces words to their roots. For example in Chapter the thirteenth of *Isaiab* where *Jahellu* is writ without an *Aleph*, he says this word is instead of *Jahellu* with an *Aleph*: then he adds this observation there are some words where the letter *Aleph* is silent and left out as superfluous although it belongs to the body of the words. The liberty which the Transcribers have taken of adding or leaving out these sort of letters has bred much confusion in the Hebrew Text, so that it is necessary we should understand the rules that we may rather observe the sense than the manner of every word's being writ.

R. *Juda* moreover explains the alterations of the pointing as they are occasioned by accents. In a word, he gives an account of all the niceties of Grammar; as for example of *Sceva*, of *Dagesh*, *Hateph*, *Patah*, and after having examin'd the Verbs which begin with an *Aleph* he passes to those that begin with a *Jod*, and says that the Doctours of his time, not understanding this part of Grammar, have committed gross errors. He runs at large upon their ignorance and the reasons which they alledge; whence we may easily judge how little the *Jews* understood the Hebrew Tongue before they had learnt the art of Grammar from the Arabians. They could not, according to this Authour, distinguish the Præterperfect Tense from the Future in Verbs that began with a *Jod*, wherefore he makes a long Catalogue of them and reduces them to their roots, wherein he sometimes differs from the Grammarians who went before him and were not understanding enough to make these distinctions.

The same Rabbin afterwards passes to the second part of his Grammar, where he speaks of the Verbs whose second letter is silent, especially since the adding of points to the Hebrew Text, whereas there was heretofore no other vowels but these silent letters. He observes in this second part the same method he does in his first, and afterwards examines the Verbs which end with any of these silent letters, and this makes the third or last part of his Grammar, for we ought to understand that the pure Hebrew words have never more than three letters in their root.

We can conclude nothing from this Work of R. *Juda Hing*, unless that the ancient Grammarians agreed not among themselves concerning the root of the Verbs which we call silent, and the Rabbins at present can't agree hereupon notwithstanding all the rules which have been invented for the clearing this matter.

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There's none but knows that each Hebrew Verb has no more than three radical or essential letters, but when any one is wanting it is hard to find it out: some reduce it to one root and others to another, which is one cause of the various Translations of the Bible.

R. *Jona*, who is the most famous Jewish Grammarian next to R. *Juda*, has composed seven Books of Grammar, and amongst others a Dictionary. The Works of this Rabbin were never printed, although they were translated out of Arabick into Rabbincal Hebrew. I have read the first part of one of his Works intituled *Ricma*, which contains his Grammar and Dictionary; he observes in the beginning that the *Jews* of his time very much neglected the study of Hebrew; then he proposes the Arabians, among whom he dwelt, as an example who carefully refined their Tongue. He moreover mentions the first Grammarians, placing R. *Saadias Gaon* first, and another Head of a School, called *Samuel Ben Haphni*, after having spoken of *Saadias Gaon's* method in interpreting the difficult words by other such like in the Arabick Tongue, he acknowledges that Hebrew has been almost lost, and has been restored by other neighbouring Tongues. If we will believe him this Tongue was not in its perfection when he writ his Grammar, he makes no scruple of accusing the Grammarians that went before him of ignorance, whom he blames for being often deceived in placing of several letters amongst radical or essential ones which were not so. He spares not even R. *Juda*, whom he blames for being deceived as well as the rest; lastly, he promises in his Preface that he would give in his Dictionary the interpretation of some words which are hardly understood, as the names of Measures, Weights, Animals, precious Stones, and several other such, which he promises to explain according to the opinion of R. *Saadias Gaon*, R. *Seriva*, R. *Hai*, R. *Samuel Ben Haphni*, and other *Jews*, called *Geonim*, who had gone before him.

He begins his Work by dividing of the parts of Speech, as the Arabian Grammarians had done and he particularly explains the nature of those things, and their proprieties, which he speaks differently of according to the several opinions of Grammarians: for the more methodical proceeding he divides the letters into guttural, labial and others, then he sets down their proprieties and different unions in relation to Verbs. He says, for

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example, that by the union of the two letters, *Beth* and *Ain*, the Verbs *Avar*, *Baar*, *Bera*, *Rova*, *Raan*, are made, and afterwards gives the letters which are called radical or essential, which he distinguishes from those that are accidental or added. The essential letters, according to this Authour, are *Gimel*, *Zain*, *Daleth*, *Heth*, *Teth*, *Samec*, *Ain*, *Phe*, *Tzad*, *Coph*, *Resh*, the others are accidental or added. He observes that the Grammarians that went before him, either in the *Levant* or in *Spain*, have treated of all these questions, and that they have invented certain marks or signs for the better understanding the use of these letters, and amongst others he quotes R. *Menahem Ben Zaruc*. The examples of R. *Jona* on this Subject illustrate many places of Scripture, and he sometimes condemns R. *Juda* for being deceived sometimes in reading one point for another, as in the Verb *Feielil* in Chap. 16. *Isaiab* Verse 7, he enlarges much upon these sort of letters, that we may distinguish what is essential in words from what is added. He explains also the changing of one letter for another, and the points which are sometimes put one for another. I shall not here speak of the declensions of Nouns and Verbs, and several other niceties of Grammar which are not particular to this Subject.

If I could have found these two Rabbins Dictionaries I would have treated more at large upon this Subject, but for want of them we may go to the Dictionary of *Kimhi*, who quotes them and at the same time confutes them. Whence we may justify in many places the ancient Interpreters of the Scripture when they agree not with the modern ones, and we find that these Grammarians look not on the *Massoret* as infallible, since they heed onely the sense, and apply the general rule of the *Massoret* to places as they think fit. Let us now come to the Grammarians whose Books are printed.

The first and most learned of these Grammarians is *Aben Ezra*, two of whose Books of Grammar we have under the names of *Elegancy* and *The Ballance of the holy Tongue*. As he follows the method of the Rabbins *Juda* and *Jona* we shall not here dwell much upon him. I shall onely take out of this Authour's Books what he thought concerning the Hebrew Text and the *Massoret*, in the Preface to his Commentaries upon the *Pentateuch*, he affirms that we ought not to trouble our selves how words are writ, whether they are intire or defective, because that most commonly depends

depends upon Transcribers. He wholly rejects their reasons who study onely ridiculous allegories and quirks which are onely fit to amuse Children: he has not however blamed the Work of the *Massorets* as we have already observed but he could not endure the subtilties of some Jewish Interpreters who find mysteries where there are none. He considers not so much how words are writ as the sense, and he scruples not to change one letter into another as *Samec* into *Shin*, *Aleph* into *Ain* and *He*, and he observes for example that the word *Ubal*, Chap. 8. of *Daniel*, which is writ with an *Aleph* ought to be explained as if it were *Jubal* with a *Jod*, as it is writ in Chap. 17. of *Jeremiah*, and the reason he gives is that these two letters are usually changed one for another, and that in the Scripture the word *Isai* with a *Jod* is the same with *Isai* with an *Aleph*, Saint *Ferom's* Translation in this place agrees with *Aben Ezra*.

R. *David Kimhi*, who was also a Spaniard, as well as *Aben Ezra*, has been the most followed of all the Jewish Grammarians, as well by reason of his method as the neatness of his style. Those of this Family have very much studied the Hebrew Tongue: we have a Grammar of *Moses Kimhi*, Brother to *David*, which has been translated into Latin, and besides the Books of *Joseph Kimhi* their Father are sometimes quoted by the Rabbins. But R. *David Kimhi*, having gone beyond the others, his are the onely Books, which have been read for these last ages. The Christians have translated them according as they had necessity, and have regulated thereby their Translations. The modern *Jews* also prefer him before all other Grammarians, and *Aben Melech*, who has made a collection of the Grammatical interpretations of the Rabbins upon the whole Scripture relies chiefly on this Authour. He says there are none that can be compared to him either for the study of the *Massoret* or for the examining the good manuscript Copies of the Bible in *Spain*. Although *Kimhi* follows the *Massoret* exactly enough, he nevertheless sometimes deviates from it, and changes letters one for the other for the finding out a better sense. He observes for example in Chap. 11. of *Zecharia*, where we read *Jotsar*, that the Interpreters translate it as if it was *Otsar*, with an *Aleph* instead of a *Jod*. The *Massoret* allows us indeed to change the letters one for another in those places it has mark't out, but the Grammarians have gone further and applied the general rules of the *Massoret* to several other places.

The same R. *David Kimhi* keeps not so close to the *Massoret* pointing but that he sometimes takes notice of the good Spanish Manuscript Copies, which he often quotes; for example, in Chap. 11. of *Ezechiel*, where we read *Mikdas* with a *Camets* under the *Daleth* and *Meath* with a *Patah*, he says that *Mikdas* has a *Patah*, and that it is to be construed with *Meath*, because *Meath* is there a Noun Substantive. This he affirms he has seen in some correct Copies, although in others *Meath* is writ with a *Camets* and consequently is an Adjective: whence we ought to conclude that we are not altogether certain of the *Massoret* reading, and that we may consult the ancient Copies, since R. *D. Kimhi* prefers a reading which is contrary to the *Massoret*.

In Chap. 24. of the same Prophet where we read *Harkah* with a *Patah* under the *He*, he in his Dictionary observes that it is either the Infinitive or Imperative of the Conjugation *Hiphil*, that R. *Jona* has read a *Camets* under the *He* in a Copy of *Jerusalem*, and then that it is an Infinitive of the Conjugation *Hophal*, and moreover the same R. *Jona* affirms that he had read it with a *Patah* in a Copy of *Babylon*, and that this reading agrees with what he had read in correct Copies. Although the question is not here concerning a *Camets* or a *Patah*, this alteration however occasions great varieties in the Translations of the Bible. In Chap. 9. of *Ezechiel*, where we at present read *Damim* he read in his Copy *Hamas* as appears by his Commentary upon Ver. the 9th of this Chapter, and he at the same time observes that other correct Copies have *Damim*. He has not however followed this last reading although it was in the *Massoret*.

Lastly, if we never so little consider the reading of *Kimhi's* Dictionary, and his Commentaries on the Scripture, we shall find that he has very often doubted not onely about the interpretation of words, but also of the way how they ought to be read, and for this reason he has consulted the best Copies he could find. Besides the Grammarians who lived before him, especially R. *Juda*, R. *Jona* and R. *Aben Ezra* are not always of his opinion concerning the way of reading the Hebrew Text. If he had been perswaded of the infallibility of the *Massoret* he might easily by it have decided the various readings, instead of going to the ancient Copies. There was sometimes so much probability in the various readings that he dares affirm nothing at all, as appears in the root *Jakar* in his Dictionary, and many other words which he doubts

doubts of both as to their interpretation and their way of being writ.

The great esteem which *Kimhi's* Books have acquir'd has made most of the Grammarians who writ since him to be neglected, although some of them have corrected him in several places. R. *Joseph Aben Caspi*, who has composed a Dictionary called *Chains of Silver*, differs often from the other Grammarians, and he condemns in the beginning of his Work R. *Jona Aben Ezra* and *Kimhi* for being sometimes mistaken in the roots. But as he very well understood the uncertainty of the Hebrew Tongue, he on these occasions gives the interpretations which he thinks are most probable without daring to decide any thing thereupon. I do not believe that this Rabbins Book has been printed.

*Elias Levita*, a German Jew, who dwelt almost continually in *Italy*, is the most learned Critick among the Jews, and has excelled them all in the art of Grammar. Besides his observations on the Books of *Moses* and *David Kimhi*, he has composed several works of Grammar, which have been translated into Latin, and his reflections on this Art are very usefull for a through understanding of the Hebrew Tongue. *Munster*, *Fagius* and some other Christians who lived in his time, profited very much from the learned readings of this Rabbin, who created a great deal of hatred to himself by reason of his too great communication with the Christians to whom he taught Hebrew. He had at *Rome* some Cardinals and persons of the highest quality of that City for his Scholars. *Munster*, who has translated some of his Works, affirms that before he had read the Books of *Elias* he had took upon him the title of Master although he was not at that time a good Scholar. We may say that this is the onely man among the Jews who has not suffer'd himself to be prepossessed, and barely relied upon the authority of his Doctours. He has examined things in themselves and without following the prejudices of the other Jews, he has treated of the various readings of the Hebrew Text, the Points and Accents with a great deal of liberty. We ought more especially to read an excellent Treatise of his call'd *Massoreth Flammaforeth*, where like a judicious Critick he explains the difficulties of the *Massoret*.

We may join with this Rabbin another Jewish Grammarian called *De Balmes*, who lived at the same time, whose Grammar was printed at *Venice* with the Latin Translation thereof in the year

year 1523. This Authour is not at all methodical, but for all that he is very learned, and corrects in many places the errors of the Grammarians who had writ before him, his whole Work plainly shews the uncertainty of the Hebrew Grammar.

I pass over several other Jewish Grammarians who all followed the same method and have hardly done any thing else than copy'd the Books of them that went before them. I shall onely add a word or two concerning a short Grammar printed at *Constantinople*, and composed by a Jew called *Aaron Harifcon*. This Authour endeavours chiefly to clear the confusion of the Hebrew Text, and he has laid down certain rules for that purpose, whence we may easily conclude that this Text is very uncertain and has been subject to many alterations. He says then that the Scripture uses to repeat the same things and sometimes the same words over again; that there are things wanting, redundances, transpositions, plurals join'd with singulars and singulars with plurals, words writ different ways, nouns feminine with verbs masculine, and on the contrary nouns masculine join'd with verbs feminine, and several other irregularities which he gives examples of. He gives us also a little abridgment of the *Massoret*. In a word all these rules have been taken from the present Hebrew Text, and it has not been examined whether this proceed from the nature of the Hebrew Tongue, or the faults of Transcribers.

Lastly, we are to observe that we find more various readings of the Scripture Text in the ancient Jewish Manuscripts than in printed Books which have been corrected, especially in the places where the Text agreed not with the present one. The Manuscripts themselves differ very much, and there are very few Jewish Criticks who observe these varieties when they print the Books. The Manuscript Copies for example of *Kimhi's* Dictionary are very different from the printed ones, and especially from the Edition of *Venice*. The Jew who printed this same Book at *Naples* has dealt more sincerely, for he freely confesses that he corrected the manuscript Copy in some places where it differed from the Text of the Bible, and he has put these various readings at the end of the Book, as Mr *Cappellain* has observ'd in a Book where he accuses the Jews of foul dealing. We ought not however methinks for all this to accuse them of foul dealing, because they have printed these Books according to the usual rules of

Criticism,

Criticism, by correcting the places which they thought were faulty, we ought rather to lay this fault upon the prejudices of their *Massoret*, which have caused them to condemn as erroneous whatsoever agreed not therewith, and to neglect the putting down the various readings which they thought were unprofitable. To conclude, it is time for us to finish the first part of this Work, and after having shewn the uncertainty of the Hebrew Text and Tongue, and the various conditions of the Originals of the holy Scripture for many ages, let us now pass to the Translations of these Originals, which we shall examin in the following Book.

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*The End of the First Book.*

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A  
CRITICAL HISTORY  
OF THE  
**Old Testament.**

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B O O K II.

*Wherein the chief Translations of the Bible are Treated of.*

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C H A P. I.

*The General Translations of the Bible, which have been made  
either by Jews or Christians.*

**H**AVING given the History of the Holy Text, and of the several changes which have befallen it since the loss of the first Originals; I shall now pass to the History of the chief Translations made either by Jews or Christians. The Holy Scriptures having been given to men only for their Instruction, was at first writ in a Language known to them; and it is certain that the Jews spoke *Hebrew* when *Moses* gave them the Law. The other Historical  
A Books



Books of the Bible were likewise writ in a time when the Hebrew was the Jews Mother-tongue, and lastly the Prophets compos'd their Prophecies in the Tongue which was then spoke, and was understood by the People; but as States are lyable to changes, the Jews having been subjected to the *Chaldeans*, and remaining in Bondage several years in *Babylon*, forgot their own Language; and being returned to *Jerusalem* they spoke *Chaldee*.

At that time the Jewish Doctors began to interpret the Text of the Law to the People in *Chaldee*. Nevertheless there was not then compos'd any entire body of the *Chaldee* Paraphrase to be given to the People; but they continued the reading of the Books of *Moses* in the same tongue they were writ in, and the Doctors were contented with expounding them in a language understood by all. This ancient Custom has since been observ'd by all the Jews in what Country soever they have dwelt; and to this we are to ascribe most of the Translations which the Jews have made almost into all these Languages. To each Verse, or at least to the hardest words, they joyn'd the interpretation in the Vulgar Tongue, to the end they might understand what they read, which occasioned the making of Translations or whole Paraphrases, and we yet find several Manuscript Copies of the Pentateuch, where the *Chaldee* Paraphrase is mingled with the Hebrew Text; and in this manner, that after every Hebrew Verse, the same Verse follows translated into *Chaldee*.

The Great Translation commonly called the Septuagint, was the first Translation which the Jews made of the Bible; it was so approved of by them, that the Hellenist Jews, which were very numerous, seem equally to have esteemed it with the Original of *Moses*: in that they read it as is commonly believed in their Synagogues; whereas the Vulgar Latin Translations serv'd only for the instruction of the People, and to be read in the Schools, according to the custom which the Jews observe to this day in the same Synagogues, where the Law of *Moses* is permitted to be read only in the Original, although most of them understand it not. Which makes me doubt whether it be true that the Hellenist Jews read in their Synagogues any Copies of the Law of *Moses* but the Original Hebrew, although *Tertullian*, and some other Fathers affirm that the Jews of their time read in their Synagogues the Greek Septuagint Translation; we shall hereafter clear this difficulty.

The *Samaritans* likewise had a Greek Translation of the Pentateuch, of which some fragments only remain, which we may gather

*Samaritans.*

ther out of the Works of the Fathers and some Greek Scholiasts. They moreover have another Translation of the same Pentateuch in the *Samaritan* Language, or rather in old *Chaldee*, or *Syriac*, which comes very nigh the Antient *Babylonian* Tongue. Besides this last *Samaritan* Translation, which is Printed in the English and French *Polyglottes*, there are others in *Arabick*, but all these Translations are only for the use of particular Persons, and for the Schools, whereas they read in the Synagogues the Original of the Law of *Moses*, writ in the Hebrew and Samaritan Characters.

The Carait Jews use the Translations made by the other Jews, *Caraites* and they highly esteem a Translation of the Pentateuch into Vulgar Greek, Printed at *Constantinople* in Hebrew Characters. They likewise make use of some Arabick Translations, but they read in their Synagogues the Hebrew Text, which is the Original. In fine, we may say that the Jews, as well as the Samaritans and Rabbinit Jews, have translated the Scripture into the vulgar Tongues of all the Countries they have lived in. At least, if they have not all these Translations in one body; they have joyn'd the Explanation of every word of the Text in a Tongue they understood; I have seen some fragments of the Books of *Moses* writ in Hebrew, with a French Paraphrase upon the most difficult words in Hebrew Characters, which we can ascribe to none but the Jews of *France*, who made these Paraphrases when they had Synagogues, and Schools, in which they read and expounded the Law.

I shall in the series of this Discourse speak of several other Translations which the Jews have made for their own private use. The Spanish Jews have likewise made some, which the Jews of *Italy* make use of, as well as the *Spaniards*, because the *Italian* Jews generally understand both the Languages; and I believe there is no Jewish Translation writ in *Italian*.

Moreover we may observe that most of the Translations in the vulgar Tongues are of a Barbarous Language, and altogether unpolish'd, the words they make use of in these Translations are not ordinarily used, forasmuch as the Jews who would Translate word for word the Hebrew Text, have made a certain Language, which may be called the Language of the Synagogue. The Greek of the Septuagint Translation, and even that of the New Testament is of this sort, so that it is almost impossible to understand it, without perfectly understanding the Syriack or Chaldee Tongue, which is the Language the Jews spoke at that time. This has occasioned some

learned Criticks to call it the Hellenist Tongue, to distinguish it from the Common Greek.

As for the Translation of the Christians. It was a long time before the Church would acknowledge any other Scripture than the Septuagint Translation. It is true that our Saviour and the Apostles being at *Jerusalem* and the neighbouring Cities, could make use of no other Text of the Bible than the original Hebrew, which was then read; but after our Saviours death the Apostles being dispersed into several places of the Empire where they used the Grecian language, and where the Jews themselves read in their Synagogues, or at least in their Schools, the Septuagint Translation, they thought they were obliged to make use of the same, to convert at the same time both Jews and Gentiles. It had been to no purpose to have used the Hebrew Text, which very few of the Jews then understood.

Many Nations who spoke different Languages, having in series of time embraced the Christian Religion, the Septuagint Translation which was in that time the only Authentick Scripture amongst the Christians, was translated into all their Languages. Nevertheless we have almost nothing remaining of these Antient Translations, and those which we have under the name of the *Æthiopian*, *Persian*, and some other People seem to be of less Antiquity than those Antient ones spoke of by the Greek Fathers. The Latin Translation, which was likewise called the Italian or Vulgar, and which is very Antient, has been better preserved than the others, although we have it not at present perfect, and as it was in the time of *St. Jerom* and *St. Augustin*. It was necessary for *Rome* which was the Seat of the Empire, to have a particular Translation in Latin: besides the Latin was not circumscribed within the compass of *Italy*, but it had spread it self into *Africa* amongst the *Gauls*, into *Spain*, *Pannonia*, and several other places of the Empire, where Colonies had been sent, which carried along with them the Latin Tongue.

There is another Latin Translation which we commonly call the Vulgar, and which is very different from the Antient Vulgar or *Italian* one, which was used in all the Western Churches before *St. Jerom* had made his New Translation of the Bible from the Hebrew Text. We will hereafter explain the reasons of so great a change in the Western Church.

The Western Church has always kept to the ancient Greek Septuagint Translation, which every Nation has translated into their own Tongue; the *Syrians* only made two Translations of the Scripture, the

the one from the Hebrew, and the other from the Greek Septuagint, which they preserve to this day. But we shall hereafter examine all these Translations in particular, and at the same time the Arabick, and others which are us'd in the Eastern Churches. The Schism of these last Ages has occasion'd many other Translations, most of them made from the Hebrew Text: And as in the beginning of Christianity, *Aquila*, *Theodotion*, *Symmachus*, and some other Interpreters, set up new Greek Translations against that of the Septuagint, so likewise the Protestants have set up their new Translations against the ancient Latin or Vulgar one, authoriz'd by the whole Western Church. The *Albigenses*, *Waldenses*, and those of the Sect of *Wickliff*, had made Translations of the Bible into the Vulgar Tongue; but as they understood not Hebrew, they translated from the Vulgar Translation as well as they could.

The Protestants which came afterwards in a time when the Hebrew Tongue was understood in *Europe*, thought they could have no better reason for the laying aside the Translation which was us'd in the Western Church, than by making new Translations from the Hebrew, which should be more exact than the ancient ones. *Luther* was the first who translated from the Original all the Bible into High-Dutch; and not being satisfi'd with his first Translation, he made another. His Translation has been again translated by those of his Sect into Danish, Swedish, Saxon, and other Languages. *Leon of Juda* made likewise almost at the same time another Translation of the Bible into High-Dutch for the *Zuinglians*, which Sect he was of. Those of *Geneva*; who in the beginning of their Reformation us'd an ancient French Translation made from the Vulgar, would likewise have a Translation from the Original into French. *Robert Olivetan*, a Kinsman of *Calvins*, was the Author of this first Translation printed at *Neufchastel* in the year 1535. and it has since been several times review'd and corrected by those of *Geneva*. The English, who in the beginning of their Reformation contented themselves with following the Vulgar Translation only, afterwards made others from the Hebrew. *King James*, who found fault with all the English Translations that had been then made, commanded at a Conference held at *Hampton-Court*, a new Translation of the Bible to be made; which was done accordingly as was design'd, and the English make use of this Translation at this day.

The common opinion of the Protestants was, that the Old Testament ought to be translated from the Hebrew, and the New one from the

the Greek; but as most of their first Translators were not very learned in these two Languages, it was impossible for their Translations to be exact. Wherefore they have since that been several times review'd, and notwithstanding all the precautions they could take, their Translations are yet very faulty. They have not only differ'd from the *Catholicks*, but even amongst themselves, chiefly in the Translation of the Old Testament.

*Catholicks.* The *Catholicks*, who had for a long time made use of no other Translation than the Vulgar Latin one, were in some sort oblig'd to make some new Translations into the Vulgar Tongue, to oppose the *Protestants* with; but they thought it was more proper to translate from the Vulgar, which was the Translation of the Western Churches, than from the Hebrew, which was consecrated to the use of the Synagogues. Some *Catholicks* nevertheless had before that time made Translations of the Bible into the Vulgar Tongue; but besides that they were few, they were not at all regarded, and no body read them. There were nevertheless some *Catholicks* who took the liberty of translating of the Bible from the Original, not being satisfi'd with the Latin Translation receiv'd in all the Western Church. *Pagnin*, of the Order of St. *Dominick*, was the first who took this liberty, and he was supported in his design by some *Popes*, who authoriz'd his new Translation from the Hebrew. The *Protestants*, in imitation of him, have likewise made several Latin Translations of the Bible, which have all differ'd; for as much as these new Interpreters not following the same method, it was impossible they should all agree upon the same Subject; and I am very well assur'd, that there has hardly been one Translator of the Bible, who has had a sufficient capacity and understanding for so great a Work. Those who understood the Hebrew well enough for to read the *Rabbins* Books, did but barely copy them; the others on the contrary even amongst the *Protestants*, made a scruple of deviating from the ancient Latin Interpreter, and it is very probable that this scruple of theirs was grounded on their ignorance, and they made this a pretence whereby to conceal it more artificially. *Luther*, who made a Translation after his own method, laugh'd at the new *Grammarians*, which he blam'd for following the *Rabbins* too exactly. On the other side, as he seem'd to blame them, because he understood them not, some of these new *Grammarians* remark'd the fault of his Translation in several places, and scrupled not to publish them.

*Pagnin.* *Pagnin*, although he was more reserv'd than the *Protestants*, has nevertheless

nevertheless often deviated from the Vulgar, under pretence that he believ'd it not to be St. *Jerom's*; but he has not always left it for the better; and moreover his Translation is barbarous and obscure, because he tyes himself up too close to the Rules of the Hebrew Grammar. *Arius Montanus*, who pretended to correct this Translation, has made it both more barbarous and obscure than it was, and has fill'd it full of faults. *Thomas Malvanda*, of the Order of St. *Dominick*, who has translated most of the Old Testament, has gone beyond these two last Translators in Barbarisms. I know not whether we ought to put Cardinal *Cajetan* amongst the number of Translators of the Scripture, under whose Name we have several Books of the Bible literally translated, because he himself acknowledges, that not understanding the Hebrew or Greek Tongue, he has had recourse to persons that were learned in these Tongues, and that he made use of them in the translating of the holy Scriptures into Latin. *Sebastian Chastillon*, who has in his Latin excell'd the other Interpreters, has affected too much the nearness and elegance of style, and this affectation has in some places weakned the sense of the Text. His Translation nevertheless is not so contemptible, as *Theodoro Beza*, and some of the *Geneva Doctors* would have us believe. *Leon of Juda* has observ'd the medium betwixt *Pagnin* and *Chastillon*; but he sometimes gives himself too much liberty, and follows not exactly the words of the Text. Now let us severally examine all the different Translations, which require a more strict and particular Examination.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Greek Septuagint Translation, its Authority. The History of Aristæus, and some other ancient Books, seem to be fictitious. There was only the Law of Moses at first translated into Greek. Why it was call'd the Septuagint Translation.*

**A**Ll Antiquity till St. Jerom's time, believ'd the Greek Septuagint Translation was made by Prophets, and not by common Translators. St. Jerom. St. Jerom, who durst oppose so approv'd an opinion, was afterwards oblig'd to carry himself according to, and to agree sometimes with, the common opinion, because he was accus'd of being a Jew. In effect, the prejudices are very great in favour of this Translation, since it is manifest that the Apostles make use of it in declaring of the Gospel to the whole Earth: The Jews themselves had in a manner canoniz'd it in their Synagogues, before the Birth of our Saviour, especially those who liv'd amongst the Grecians, and who for this reason are usually call'd Hellenists. But notwithstanding all these prejudices, we ought to prefer the opinion of St. Jerom in this Point before all Antiquity, because he has seriously examin'd this matter, whereas the other Fathers follow'd use and custom. When there is question made of any thing purely critical, we ought not wholly to rely upon simple Authorities, if at the same time they agree not with the truth.

Hieron.  
Quæst.  
Heb. in  
Gen.

The Apostles did not use the Septuagint Translation, because it was inspir'd by God, but because Greek was the common language of those Nations to whom they preach'd the Gospel; and this makes St. Jerom say, that St. Stephen in the *Acts of the Apostles* makes mention of the Translation of 75 persons who went into Egypt, as it is in the Greek Septuagint Translation, whereas there are only 70 in the Hebrew Text. The reason which he gives for this place is, because St. Luke who compos'd this History for the Gentiles, would not quote any other Scripture than what they had had already publish'd. In a word, it is not probable, that St. Stephen speaking to the Jews of Jerusalem, would quote the words of the Old Testament otherwise than

than they were in Hebrew; and therefore it is likely that St. Luke who writ the Book of the *Acts*, was the Author of this alteration. As for the Fathers, they could acknowledge no other Copies of the Scriptures than what the Apostles had left them. I acknowledge, that *Josephus* and *Philo*, who give the History of this Translation, make it to be of very great Authority, as well as the primitive Fathers of the Church: But as these Authors have no other ground for what they say than the Book of *Aristæus*, who is the first Author of *Aristæus*: this History, and some other Writers who are usually believ'd to be very ancient, it is fit we should particularly show, that *Aristæus* and these other Authors seem to have been feign'd by the Hellenist Jews, long before *Josephus* and *Philo*.

I shall not stay to examine here the Reasons of *Scaliger* and some other Criticks, who have affirmed the Book of *Aristæus* was a feign'd one, because the Chronology, as they say, is false; and that the Tribes of the Jews are set down, as if they lasted to that time. I shall not, I say, spend time in examining whether the Chronology of this Book may be justifi'd, or in enquiring whether in that time the Tribes could be distinguish'd. I shall likewise pass by all the other Reasons which are usually alledg'd, to confute the Book of *Aristæus*, because methinks it is more proper to search for the truth of this History in the History it self, than to wrangle about things which at most are only probable. Now it is certain, if we read the History of *Aristæus* with never so little attention, we shall be convinc'd that some Hellenist Jew writ this Book in favour of his Nation under the Name of *Aristæus*. The Miracles related, and the manner of the writing of this Book, sufficiently show the Genius of the Jews, who always delighted, and especially at that time, to invent Books which contain'd only extraordinary things. The Author of this History seems himself to forestal the Objection which might hereupon be made, by saying, that those who read it will have much ado to believe it.

In a word, there is nothing can more clearly demonstrate the Genius of the Jews, than these words of this *Aristæus*, where he says, that some going about the Translation of the same Books, have been diverted by being punish'd by God; and that one *Theopompus*, being so bold as to insert in his History part of this Law not well translated, became distracted. And he farther adds, that the same *Theopompus*, during some little interval of his madness, having pray'd to God to let him know the cause of his Disease, God told him in a Dream,

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that

*Theodectus.* that all that had hapned to him was, because he had gone about the publishing of sacred things, which ought to be conceal'd; at last he was cur'd, after he had desisted from what he went about. There is in the same place another Story concerning *Theodectus*, a Tragical Poet, who was struck blind, because he had been so rash as to insert in one of his Plays something of the Law of *Moses*; but having afterwards acknowledg'd his fault, and ask'd pardon of God, he recover'd his sight.

*Talmud.*

If we compare these Miracles with those related in the *Talmud*, upon the account of the *Chaldean* Paraphrase of *Jonathan* upon the Prophets, we shall easily find out the rise of all these pretended Wonders. According to the testimony of the *Jewish* Doctors, there was a voice heard from Heaven, which ask'd *Jonathan*, who he was that durst reveal the secrets of God by publishing of them to men; and they say, that *Jonathan* was hindred by that voice from translating the other Books of the Bible, as if the holy Scriptures were not at the first given in a known Tongue, and that they were not permitted to be expounded to the people, when they no longer understood that first Tongue. But the *Jews* us'd to invent these sort of Histories, when they had a mind to maintain any Truth; and this makes me believe, that the Law of *Moses* was really translated into Greek under one of the *Ptolemies*, and that the *Jews* after their usual custom, afterwards writ the History of this Translation. As it was generally approv'd on by the *Jews*, especially the *Hellenists*, who read it in their Synagogues or Schools, they afterwards invented all these pleasant Stories, to recommend it to those of their own Nation. *Josephus* and *Philo* have likewise related them upon the bare testimony of *Aristeus*, whom they have not throughly examin'd, being interest'd the same way with the other *Jews*. The Fathers likewise have given this History of *Aristeus* a favourable acceptance, because it seem'd so firmly to support the Cause of the Church against the *Jews*, who at that time refus'd the Septuagint Translation, and had recourse to others which they thought more exact and agreeable to the Original Hebrew. They added other Stories to the first, from the relation of the *Jews* of *Alexandria*; but *St. Jerom*, who had diligently study'd this matter, presently detected the falsity of these new Histories, and laugh'd at the 72 Cells, which *Justin Martyr* affirms he had seen at *Alexandria*, where they pretended the 72 Interpreters were shut up to make their Translation, and although they were separated, they had all made the same Translation. This Story of the Cells is fet  
down

down in the ancient *Jewish* Books, although it is neither in *Josephus*, nor *Aristeus*, and it proceeds from nothing else but the ancient custom of the *Jews*, who always delighted in inventing of wonderful things, and in telling of pleasant Stories to the people. This has hapned to the false *Aristeus*, who minding nothing but imposing upon others, has falln in downright contradictions: For he supposes, that before the Septuagint Translation, the *Greeks* understood the Law of *Moses*, and consequently it had been translated into their Tongue, as *Aristobulus*, who liv'd in that time, in the Book which goes under his Name, likewise declares; which is clear contrary to the design of those who translated it, which suppos'd that it was only writ in Hebrew Characters. I know that some affirm these first Greek Translations to be imperfect, and that *Ptolemy's* design was only to have one more exact; but there is no reason for this, and it is contrary to the History of the pretended *Aristeus*, besides that we know not of any Greek Translations of the Law before that of the Septuagint.

The Book of *Aristobulus* a *Jew* and Peripatetick Philosopher (where it is said, that before *Alexander* the Law of *Moses* had been translated into Greek, and that the *Grecian* Philosophers had borrow'd many things from the *Hebrews*) is of no greater Authority than that of *Aristeus*, and several others, which *Eusebius* and *Josephus* speak of. One may observe that not only *Josephus*, but likewise *Eusebius*, and some other Fathers, have often quoted Authors which favour'd their side, without particularly examining into the truth of them, as it has hapned to the Works of the *Sibylls*, which every one knows are feign'd. Wherefore we ought not so easily to believe the bare Authority of the ancient Fathers, in things which belong only to Criticism.

*Origen*, who was not much given to Allegories, confirms our opinion concerning these ancient Authors, who writ the History of the *Jews*: For speaking of *Hecateus* who had liv'd with *Ptolemy*, Son of *Lagus*, and had been bred up with *Alexander* the Great, he affirms, that *Herennius Philo* doubts whether the Book which is usually thought to be *Hecateus's*, be his or no, because he commends the *Jews* too much, without he had been of their Religion. *Aristeus*, *Hecateus*, *Clearcus*, and some other ancient Authors, who have made Treatises concerning the *Jews*, have so spoken of them, that one would think, that the Books publish'd under their Names, were feign'd by the *Hellenist Jews*; or that the *Hellenist Jews*, have added several things,



Vossius.

things, or that they themselves were *Jews*; which is hardly probable. I confess I understand not *Vossius's* Argument, who affirms, that this ancient Greek Translation, which *Aristobulus* supposes to have been long before the Septuagint, was made from an uncorrect Copy, and writ in Samaritan Characters; and he farther adds, that this was the reason why another was made from better Copies writ in Jewish or Babylonian Characters. The passage of *Aristæus* quoted to prove this opinion, says nothing at all in the Original of what he so boldly asserts; but there is only, that the Law of *Moses* was writ in Hebrew, and that it ought to be put into a better state, being translated into Greek.

Demetrius Philo.

The sence of *Demetrius's* words in the Book of *Aristæus*, is the same with what *Philo* says upon the same Subject in the 2d. Book of the Life of *Moses*, where it is said, that some being angry that none but barbarous Nations understood the Law, would have it translated into Greek.

Moreover, whether it be that this History of *Aristæus* concerning the Septuagint be true, and that the *Hellenist Jews* have afterwards added some things, as some Authors affirm; or whether it is wholly fictitious, we cannot doubt, but the *Jews* of that time translated the Bible into Greek, and that that Translation was approv'd of by the same *Hellenist Jews*. We may nevertheless by the diversity of style easily discern, that only the five Books of *Moses* were at first translated, which Translation is much more exact, than that of the other Books of the Bible, or that the Books of the Scripture were translated most of them at the same time by different Interpreters. I know that Father *Morin* and some other Criticks have alledged, that the whole Scripture was translated by the Septuagint, and that by the word *Law*, upon this occasion, is to be understood the whole Bible. But *Aristæus*, *Josephus* and *Philo* seem to write contrary to St. *Jerom*, who in this followed the *Jews* of his time. And although the word *Law* sometimes signifies the whole Scripture in general, we ought nevertheless here to restrain it with *Josephus* and the ancient *Jews*, to the five Books of *Moses*. Moreover, the Reasons which Father *Morin* brings to prove the contrary, contain nothing but unprofitable learning, and whence nothing can be concluded. He brings for example the testimony of one *Josippus*, or *Ben Gorion*, to oppose *Josephus*; as if there were not evident proofs, that the History of this *Josippus* was not altogether new and fictitious, and stuff with many Fables, as he himself acknowledges in another place.

Morin.

Josph.

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It is not necessary to confute the *Talmudists*, or rather to reconcile them among themselves upon this Subject, when they ascribe in some places the Septuagint Translation to 5 Interpreters only, and in other places to 72. according to the common opinion. When the question is about matter of History, we ought not to rely upon the *Talmud*, which was writ by ignorant Doctors, chiefly that part call'd the *Ge-* *Talmud* or *maræ*, where there are only pleasant Tales and ridiculous Disputations. Neither need we take notice of what the modern *Jews* have alledged upon this Subject, for as much as they are defective in good Historians, who have not been skilful enough in picking out what has been best in other Authors.

Gemara.

If I may be permitted to give my opinion on this Subject, methinks we ought to prefer the opinion of those, who believe that the Greek Septuagint Translation was so called, because it was approv'd of by the *Sanhedrim* at *Jerusalem*, who authoriz'd it, to the end the *Hellenist Jews* might read it in their Synagogue, or at least in their Schools, instead of the Hebrew Text. Without doubt a business of this consequence deserved an authentick approbation from the *Sanhedrim*; and it is probable that it was called the Septuagint Translation, from the 70 Judges who approved of it, and not from 70 Translators who were the Authors.

Moreover, As we give no credit to the History of *Aristæus*, so likewise we ought not to believe all the Amplifications it is stuff with, concerning the exactness of this Translation, which he assures us is found to agree wholly with the Original, and to have been so acknowledged by the consent of all the *Jews*, who were at the reading of it as soon as it was finished. Could one in so little a time judge of the faithfulness of a Translation, and how it agreed with the Original? The *Hellenist Jew*, who under the Name of *Aristæus* has rather compos'd a Romance than a true History, magnifies every thing which he relates, and he treats of nothing but what is great and extraordinary. *Philo* afterwards took from him what he writ upon this Translation; and he goes beyond him when he affirms, that those who understood the Hebrew and Greek Tongues, admir'd the exact conformity which was betwixt the Hebrew Text and Greek Septuagint Translation; and he moreover adds, that the Authors of this Translation were called Prophets, because they had so wonderfully comprehended the sence of *Moses*. But *Philo* applying himself rather to the study of Eloquence than Criticism, and not understanding the Hebrew Tongue, could not judge of a thing he had no knowledge in.

Philo.

in. There is no reason for all that, why we should not highly esteem this Translation, which St. *Jerom* and the modern Interpreters have left without any reason. As we have at this day sufficient means whereby we may judge, it will be convenient to examine it in its self, and compare it with the Hebrew Text, without relying on this same Hebrew Text, as it is at present in our Copies, but in considering it as it was in those Times.

## CHAP. III.

*Different Editions of the Greek Septuagint Translation. Explanation of the Tetraplas, Exaplas, Octaplas of Origen, with Critical Reflections on the same. The Septuagint and Hebrew Text compared. The different Editions of this Translation compared.*

**Septuagint.** **I**T is generally thought that the Original of the Greek Septuagint Translation was preserved in the Library of *Ptolemy*, till the time of *Julius Caesar*, under whom this Library was burnt. All the different Editions we have at present may be reduc'd to three principal ones, whence the others have been taken out of. The first is that which was printed in 1515. in the Bible commonly called the *Complute*, which was afterwards reprinted in the great Bible of *Antwerp*, the Polyglot of *Paris*, and the Bible of *Vatables*, which was printed with 4 Columns. The 2d. is that of *Aldus*, printed at *Venice* 1518. and which was reprinted at *Strasburg* in 1528. at *Basile* in 1545. and in 1550. and at *Frankeford* in 1597. with a Collection of *Scholias*. Nevertheless in these last Editions the same method is not observed as in that of *Venice*, because they have endeavoured to come nigher the Hebrew. The 3d. is that of the *Vatican*, printed at *Rome* 1587. without any distinction of Verses, with Greek *Scholias*. *Nobilius* a year after printed in the same City the ancient Latin Translation of this last Greek Edition, which he gathered together as well as he could; and in 1628. Father *Morin* caus'd both the one and the other to be printed at *Paris* upon 2 Columns, with the distinction of Verses which he added, enjoying the same *Scholias*.

The Criticks are much divided concerning the Authority of these Edi-

Bible *Complute*.  
Greek Bible of *Venice*.

Greek Bible of *Rome*  
*Nobilius*.

Editions. Father *Morin*, *Walton*, and some others, prefer the Edition of *Rome* before that of *Complute* or *Venice*. *Vossius* on the contrary affirms, that the Edition of *Rome* is the most corrupt. On the other side some affirm, that the Edition of *Complute* is the best, because it comes nighest the Original Hebrew; but we must agree that not one of them is exact, and that there are abundance of faults in them all. To have a true and faithful one, we ought to examine them all in particular, according to the Rules of Criticism, and much after the same manner as the Vulgar Latin Edition was corrected by good and ancient Latin Copies. We ought to have recourse to the Hebrew Text when we think it convenient, and it is necessary to be perfectly instructed in the History of this Translation. It is not sufficient to consult the Fathers in establishing the ancient Greek Translation, because the Fathers oftentimes trusted to their memory in quoting the holy Scripture, and they have made no scruple to accommodate it to their *Hypotheses*, as may be proved by several examples; to which may be added, that this Translation was corrupted before the most ancient Fathers. As those who made use of it, were not capable of going to the Original Hebrew, when they met with any difficulty; and besides that the Greek of the Septuagint Translation differs much from the ordinary Greek, there are many words changed to make other senses which seem more agreeable. If we would nevertheless reform the Greek by the Hebrew Text, as is done in the Edition of *Complute*, we ought to call that rather a Corruption than Reformation. This Correction from the Hebrew is only necessary in places where we find manifest Errors of Transcribers, or when the Authors who understood not well enough the Greek of the Septuagint, have took liberty of correcting at their own pleasure. But because these Errors are very ancient, and *Origen* himself, under pretence of making this Translation more exact and more profitable to the Church, was the cause of several alterations, it is fitting that we should begin higher the History of the different Editions of this Translation.

We cannot doubt but there were great varieties in the Greek Septuagint Translation before *Origen* put his hand to it, since he affirms, that even the Greek Copies differed mightily among themselves, either through negligence of Transcribers, or through the rashness of some who took great liberty in adding and diminishing. *Origen* undertook to correct the ancient Greek Septuagint Translation, which was then used throughout the whole Church, and to this purpose he

*Vossius* in  
Septua.  
inter.

*Orig. Tract*  
8. in *Mat.*

con-

consulted the other Greek Translations which had been made from the Hebrew, which was the reason why the ancient Edition began to be neglected after he had published his Corrections. This ancient Translation retains yet the Name of κοινή, that is to say, common or vulgar; and when St. *Jerom* speaks of these two Editions, he says, that the Vulgar is not exact, and that it has been corrupted according to Places, Times, and the pleasure of Writers; on the contrary, that that which was in the *Hexaplas* of *Origen*, was the true Greek Edition of the Septuagint. If for all that we seriously examine after what manner *Origen* corrected the ancient Greek Edition, we shall have reason to believe that he corrupted it in some places, under pretence to make it better agree with the Original. St. *Jerom* sometimes reproves the too great liberty of this Father, who occasioned great confusion in the ancient Translation, by joyning other Editions; and in one of his Epistles which he writ to St. *Augustine*, he wonders that this holy Doctor read the Septuagint not as it is in it self, but as it is corrected or rather corrupted by *Origen*. He affirms, that instead of the Translation of the Septuagint, one read a mixture of several Translations joyned together. Besides that it would be easie to shew, that *Origen* had new modell'd the Text of the ancient Greek Translation, and took too great liberty in reforming it, being not of sufficient capacity.

For the better understanding St. *Jerom's* opinion, and the work of *Origen*, we shall observe, that in the beginning of Christianity, the *Jews*, especially those that were not *Hellenists*, rejected the Septuagint Translation, as not being exact and full of Additions, which oblig'd the Fathers who understood not then the Hebrew Tongue, to have recourse to other Greek Translations, which had lately been made from the Hebrew, for fear of being surprized by the Hebrew

Tran-

*Jerom in Epist. ad Jun. & F.*

*Jerom præf. in Paralip. St. August.*

*Just. Mart.*

Translation, that the Reader, by comparing them all together, and reducing them to the Septuagint, which was the chief; might the better dispute against the *Jews*. This occasioned the *Tetraplas*, *Hexaplas*, and *Octaplas*, which St. *Jerom* and other Fathers make so often mention of in their Books.

*Epiphanius* who has curiously explain'd the Oeconomy of this great Work of *Origen*, assures us, that the *Tetraplas* contain'd the Translation of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, the Septuagint, and *Theodotion*. It was called *Tetraplas*, because it was rank'd in four Columns; and when to these four two more were added, which was the Hebrew in Greek and Hebrew Characters, it was called *Hexaplas*: And lastly, when to the *Hexaplas* there were joyned two other Translations, which had no other Name than the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, the whole Work was called *Octaplas*. According to the same *Epiphanius* *Origen* placeth the Septuagint Translation in the midst to stand as a Rule. And as in truth he had no other design than to help the *Christians* in their Disputes against the *Jews*; and on the other side, as the Septuagint Translation was the only authentick one in the Church, it was in some sort necessary to conform himself to the opinion of all the faithful, that this Translation should be placed in the middle of the rest.

The same *Origen*, to abridge so vast a Work, joynd to the Septuagint Translation Supplements taken out of the *Theodotion* Translation; in the places where the Hebrew Text was not express'd, which Supplements were mark'd with a Star; and besides he adds another mark, which was a little line, where the Septuagint had something which was not in the Hebrew. By these Notes which were then in use among the Grammarians, one might easily distinguish what was in the Septuagint more or less than in the Hebrew Text.

It will be necessary to relate here the words which *Ruffinus* makes use of, for the explaining the placing of these great Volumes, and we shall see at the same time, that according to the opinion of *Ruffinus*, *Origen* had no design of correcting the Greek Septuagint by the Hebrew Text, but only of being useful to the Church, in joyning these Translations together, so that one might read them all at the same time, and compare them with the Septuagint. *Voluit Origenes* (says *Ruffinus*) *nostris ostendere, qualis apud Judeos Scripturarum lectio teneretur, & in propriis paginis vel columnellis editiones eorum singulas quasq; descripsit, & ea que apud illos sunt addita vel descripta certis quibusdam signis additis ad versiculorum capita designavit, & in alieno non suo opere*

*Epiph. de pond. & mens. lib. 7. 19.*

*Ruffin.*

*Ruff. lav. 2.*

*suas*

*suas tantummodo notas affixit, ut sciremus non quid nobis sed quid Judæis adversum nos certantibus aut deesse aut abundare videretur.*

St. *Jerom* agrees not altogether with *Ruffinus* in the explanation which he gives of these marks which *Origen* makes use of; For he says that that which was called *Obelus* or little Line, was put only in such places as were to be struck out of the Septuagint as superfluous, because they were not to be found in the Original Hebrew. And on the contrary he says, that the other mark called *Asteriscus* or Star, was only put in places which were defective in the Septuagint which *Origen* supply'd by joining the *Theodotian* Translation with that of the Septuagint, of which he made but one body of a Translation, and that after such a manner, that by the help of this Star, one might easily distinguish what was wanting in the Septuagint, by reducing it to the Original Hebrew. St. *Jerom* who lookt upon the Hebrew as a true Original from whence he made his new Translation, ought necessarily to conclude that the Septuagint Translation was defective in those places where Supplements had been added. He was nevertheless afterwards obliged not so publickly to declare himself against the Septuagint, because he was accused of favouring the Jews, and scandalizing the whole Church by his novelties, in declaring himself for the Hebrew Text which was then received only in the Synagogues. He declared then that he undertook the making a new Translation of the Bible from the Hebrew, only to hinder the Jews from insulting over the Christians, and he shews us besides that his design was not to destroy the Septuagint Translation Authorized by the Church, but that he desired only to satisfy the Jews who traduced this Translation, and at the same time give to the Latins what *Origen* had given to the Greeks. In a word to come nigher the work of *Origen*; he publisht a Latin Translation of the Septuagint, with Stars and little Lines, to mark what was either more or less in the Septuagint than in the Hebrew, and thus he fell into the same Error he had accused *Origen* of.

As to what remains, it was for orders sake, and to accommodate himself to the common opinion of the other Fathers, that St. *Jerom* affirms he undertook his new Translation, that the Christians might dispute more effectually with the Jews. For he was perswaded that the Septuagint Translation was corrupted in many places, that it was very faulty, so that he thought it was necessary to make a new one which might come nigh the Original Hebrew. *Origen* himself, who was more reserv'd upon this subject than St. *Jerom*, seems in his private

*Jerom* in  
Epist. and  
Juy. & Fe-  
tik.

*Jerom* in  
Præf. in  
Jai.

Id. ad So-  
phron.

*Orig.* com.  
in *Matth.*

private opinion to believe that the Hebrew Text was the true Original, and that the Septuagint had added something in their Translation. But as he durst not wholly cut off their additions, he was contented to mark them with a little line. Although he was perswaded that the Hebrew Text was the Original, he notwithstanding conform'd himself to the common opinion which preferred the Septuagint Translation before the Hebrew, because they were esteem'd as Prophets rather than Interpreters; for this reason in the *Tetraplas* and *Hexaplas* he put the Septuagint Translation in the midst of all others, to the end it might serve as a rule to all the Faithful.

Many Authors who have spoke largely of this Work of *Origen*, seem not wholly to have understood the manner of its being writ upon great Scrowls or Skins sow'd together. The Jews to this day observe this ancient custom of Scrowls or Volumes for the Books they read in the Synagogues, and when they would write upon these Scrowls, they made certain Partitions or Separations dividing them into Columns, and these Columns which ought to be all equal, are the same thing with what we call Pages of a Book, so that those who say that there were several Columns in every Page, seem not to have understood the make of these ancient Volumes. *Ruffinus* who understood the make of the *Tetraplas* and *Hexaplas* uses indifferently the word *Paginas* or *Columnas*, thereby showing that in these Copies, Page or Column, was the same thing; and thus it is easie to understand, how all the Translations were placed one against the other, and that in unrolling the skins one saw the Translations on a row, and as if they had been on the same line. The Greeks call these Pages or Columns *στίλι*; and the Jews *Daph*. It might nevertheless be, that in the rolling up the Scrawl, when the sheet was large, there was several Columns one upon another. But I believe this was not observed among the Jews, who do not I believe to this day distinguish in their Scrowls or Parchments the Pages from the Columns, and they have but one word to signify the one and the other. According to this observation we may likewise say, that in the Scrowls or Parchments which contained the *Tetraplas*, *Hexaplas*, and even the *Octaplas*, every Edition was distinguisht by a Page or Column, and thus it would be unnecessary to enquire as some have done, whether the *Tetraplasses* or *Hexaplasses* were so called from the different Columns, or from the different Editions, since every Edition had its place or Column. *Origen* put the Hebrew Text which was the Original before his *Hexaplasses* and *Octoplasses*, and afterwards

*Origen*  
*Aquila*.

afterwards *Aquila's* Translation; not only because it was the most ancient of all the New Translations; but because it was word for word from the Hebrew, and that one saw by this means, by the turn of the eye, what the Hebrew signified according to the Grammatical sense of the rigor of the Letter. The Septuagint was in the middle, as the chief piece of the whole work, by which the Christians were to guide themselves in understanding the Scriptures. The Translations of *Symmachus* and *Theodotion* were placed on each side of the Septuagint, so that casting ones eyes upon these two Interpreters, which took more care in giving the sense of the Text, than in keeping to the Letter; one might easily understand the sense of the Hebrew, by reading the Septuagint Translation.

Septuagint

Symmach.  
Theodotion.

Vossius.

I shall not stay here to confute *Vossius*, who affirms that *Origen* had put in his *Hexaplas* the Samaritan, and that these *Hexaplasses* were otherwise ordered than usually they are set down. Till he gives this new order or placing of the *Hexaplasses*, we may be permitted to follow *Eusebius*, *Epiphanius*, *Ruffinus*, *St. Jerom*, and other Fathers who have spoke of these *Hexaplasses* of *Origen*, as being eye witnesses. It is also certain that *Origen* consulted not the Samaritans but the Jews of his time; and amongst others a certain Doctor called *Huilus*, who was Patriarch or chief, of the Nation of the Jews. It is true that he put into the Margin of his *Hexaplasses*, some Greek *Scholias*, which served instead of Observations: but besides that we have none of these *Scholias* at present, there is no proof whereby we can demonstrate that the places where the Samaritan Text differed from the Hebrew were markt in the Margin. The Passage of *Eusebius* which *Vossius* brings to shew it, proves nothing at all, and it is certain that the Greek word *σημειωσις* does not signifie in that place *Scholias*, in the sense he takes it in. *Eusebius* seems only to say, that *Origen* placed the Hebrew Text, with all the Greek Translations he could find, upon the same Line, and in the same place he speaks of the Seventh Edition upon the *Psalms*, although he alwayes makes use of the word *Hexaplas*. This makes me believe that this Edition was only upon some few Books of the Scripture, since the word *Hexaplas* and *Octaplas* has been alwayes kept.

Euseb. Hist.  
lib. 6. c. 16.

Septuagint

Orig. Tom.  
8. Jan. John.

To proceed, it is moreover necessary to observe that the Septuagint Translation, as we have already described it with Stars and other marks or signs, made but one body separated from the *Hexaplas*, as many have believed. But *Origen* perceiving that the common Copies of the Septuagint Translation were full of faults, he corrected them

by

by Ancient Greek Copies, and consulted likewise the Hebrew or rather the Translation of *Aquila*, which was word for word from the Hebrew, by joyning of other Translations to reform the Septuagint, out of which he took many Errors, as he himself witnesses; and moreover he reformed by the Original Hebrew, several Transpositions which were in the Septuagint. This was the reason that *St. Jerom* comparing the common Edition of the Septuagint, with that which was in the *Hexaplasses* of *Origen*, affirms, that the former is full of faults, and that the other is true and agreeable with the Hebrew. Nevertheless he did not think it was altogether exact, for then he would have had no reason to make a new Translation; but only that it deviated less than the common Edition. Besides this correction, *Origen* added to the same Septuagint Translation which was in the *Hexaplasses* and not in a Separate Volum; the marks which we have already spoke of, to the end we might at once see what was in the Septuagint more or less than in the Hebrew Text, without turning to other Translations which were in the same *Hexaplasses*.

Jerom.

From this Septuagint Translation, which was thus set down in the *Hexaplasses*, there were many Copies taken, which particular Persons had for their own proper use, and in a little time they became so common, that it was hard to find Copies of the Ancient Translation, without the mixture of the *Theodotion*. It was nevertheless distinguished by the marks which *Origen* had set down, but as the Transcribers were not altogether exact in observing these little matters, great confusion happened to the Septuagint Translation, and what yet encreased it, was, that in the Margin of some Editions, the *Scholias* or Notes were put where the different Translations of the same thing was markt, which the Transcribers afterwards inserted into the body of the Septuagint Translation. There are to this day to be seen Copies of this mixture of Translations which cannot be rectified, but by consulting the Hebrew Text or Greek Copies which have not been altered, which was hard to find even in the time of *St. Jerom*, who affirms that all the Churches both Greek, Latin, Syrian and Egyptian read the Edition of *Origen*, with the Stars and other Critical marks. He likewise adds in one of his Epistles to *St. Augustine*, that it was very hard to find one or two Copies without those marks.

Jerom. in  
Præf. in  
Dan.

Id. Epist. 8.

There



Id. Epist.  
ad Jun. &  
Fret.

There were nevertheless in the time of St. *Jerom*, Copies of the Ancient Vulgar Greek where these Notes were not, which he distinguishes from the Edition of the Septuagint which was in the *Hexaplasses*. He further adds, that some called this ancient Vulgar one, the Edition of *Lucian*. From *Constantinople* to *Antioch*, according to the same St. *Jerom*, was read the Edition of *Lucian*; in *Aegypt* the Edition of *Hesychius*, and the Provinces betwixt both followed the Copies of *Palestine*, that is to say, the correction of *Origen*, which *Eusebius* and *Pamphilus* had taken from the *Hexaplasses*, all these Editions seem to contain the pure Translation of the Septuagint, without any mixture of other Editions, and they bore only the names of those who had corrected them.

Id. Praef.  
Eu. ad  
Dam. Luci-  
an Hesych.

It is nevertheless probable, that those Authors took a great deal of liberty in their corrections, forasmuch as St. *Jerom* reproves *Lucian* by *Hesychius*, for having reformed the Septuagint with too much boldness; we ought chiefly to recur to those Editions to get a Copy of the Septuagint pure and free from additions, although they too have been altered under pretence of Reformation. The correction of *Origen*, which was published by *Eusebius* and *Pamphilus*, was likewise in such a manner in the *Hexaplasses*, that one might easily copy it without the addition of *Theodotion*, and one may in that sense say, that the Vulgar Greek was in the *Hexaplasses*; but more pure and correct than in the ancient vulgar one. *Origen* notwithstanding seems to have Reformed it too much, by regulating himself, as he affirms by other Translations, when he doubted of the true reading. Which was very dangerous, because he understood but very indifferently the Hebrew tongue, and was much prejudiced.

Orig. com.  
in Matt.

Ruffin. in  
rect. 2.

'Tis true that *Ruffinus*, who reproves St. *Jerom* for having corrupted the Scripture, affirms that *Origen* changed nothing in the Septuagint Translation; but besides that this Author was too much affected to the party of *Origen*, he was not capable of judging of the Alterations which *Origen* had introduced into the Greek Septuagint, not understanding the Hebrew.

Usher.

I do not think it necessary here to confute the opinion, or rather the Paradox of *Usher* Arch-bishop of *Armagh*, who says, there were two Greek Translations that bear the name of the Septuagint. He believes that the first was really the Septuagint, and that it was made under *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, and that the other which was likewise made at *Alexandria* under *Ptolemy Phiscon*, and which is not the true one, is that which we have at present. *M. Vallois* has excellently

M. Vallois.

confuted

confuted this new System, in a Letter which he writ to *Usher* on this Subject; and indeed St. *Jerom*, who has made the most exact Criticism he possibly could on the Septuagint, speaks not of this second Translation: He distinguishes likewise the Translation of the *Pentateuch*, from what had been made on other Books of the Bible, and he prefers the opinion of the *Jews* of his time, who believ'd that the Septuagint translated only the five Books of *Moses*. I acknowledge that in this sense one may say, there are two Translations of the Septuagint, or rather the Translation which is ascrib'd to them, was not made by the same Interpreters. Which will appear very probable, if we seriously examine the difference of style which is betwixt the Greek of the Books of *Moses*, and that of the other Books of the Bible. The *Hellenist Jews* of *Alexandria* having once had the Law translated into Greek, would without doubt cause the other Books to be translated into the same Tongue.

Jerom.

What we have already said concerning the Septuagint Translation sufficiently shews, that the *Greeks* were less exact than the *Jews* in preserving their Copies, and that it would be hard to settle this ancient Translation as it was at first; for besides that the *Greeks* understood not the Hebrew Tongue, for to have recourse to, when it was necessary, the Septuagint Translation is writ in the Greek of the Synagogue, which could only be understood by the *Hellenist Jews*, and that has partly been the reason that this Translation has been ill reformed. We have an example of this Synagogue Greek, in the Spanish *Jews* Translations of the Bible into the Spanish Tongue, which can only be understood by those who understand Hebrew and Spanish: To which we may add, that according to the testimony of *Origen* and St. *Jerom*, the Greek Copies have been altered in several places. And it is to be feared that *Origen* has likewise corrupted them, under the pretence of correcting of them, for as much as the method which he follow'd was subject to Errors, and this liberty which he took, of annexing as it were Supplements to the Septuagint Translation in his *Hexaplasses*, in time created a great confusion. It is also certain, that the Greek Transcribers took a great deal of liberty, and that the Fathers have not had all that was necessary for the redressing their Errors, except *Origen* and St. *Jerom*, who were better instructed; even these two last have not been careful enough in preserving the Greek Translation in its purity. St. *Jerom* accuses *Origen* of having much disorder'd the Septuagint Translation; and *Ruffinus* likewise blames St. *Jerom* for his Latin Translation from this Greek one. But

Origen.  
Jerom.

Jerom. in  
R. ff.

what

Jerom.

what is more strange is, that St. *Jerom* imitates *Origen* even in his faults; and that he undertakes to give the *Latins* a Work which he had condemned in *Origen*, although it was approv'd on in the whole Greek Church. To proceed, although the Hebrew Text and Septuagint Translation are defective, we ought for all that rather to follow the Hebrew than the Greek, not only because the Original ought to be prefer'd before the Copy, but because the Copy is really more defective than the Original. We ought however not to separate them, for as much as they help one another; and in this they are deceived, who are for the Hebrew Text only, or for the Septuagint alone. One may luckily repair a Text by ancient Translations, and at the same time the Translations by the Text. We have several examples of this Criticism in all sorts of Books; but as the Translators take sometimes too much liberty in translating, one cannot easily correct the Hebrew Text by the Greek Translation, nor ought the Greek Translation to be reform'd by the Hebrew at present, till both the one and other have been well examined.

Orig.  
Lucian.  
Hesych.

There are great difficulties on the part of the Greek Copies which we have at present, because the ancient Criticks, as *Lucian*, *Origen*, and *Hesychius*, who have corrected them, have not had a sufficient knowledge for the making an exact Criticism of the holy Scripture; and we have yet reason to mistrust the method they followed in their reformation. We ought likewise not to regard those who at *Rome* printed the *Vatican* Copy, nor *Father Morin*, who caused the same Copy to be reprinted at *Paris*, when they pretend it is the ancient Translation of the Septuagint, excepting some Books. It is not true, that this Edition agrees wholly with some passages quoted in the Works of the Fathers; *Usher*, Archbishop of *Armagh*, has very well proved the contrary, and at the same time made appear, that it is not so pure as some have pretended it to be, and that it differs from that which was corrected by *Origen*. We cannot however say it is the worst of all the Greek Septuagint Editions, as *Vossius* has affirmed; on the contrary, it seems to be better and more simple than that of *Venice*. There are nevertheless many faults which may be corrected, which are manifest Errors of Transcribers, and then it would be much more perfect and correct. As for the Edition of *Complute*, which was first printed, it has been very much mixt and even corrupted in many places, under pretence of making it more agreeable to the Hebrew Original. It is strange, that this last Edition which is least exact, should be inserted into the great Bible of *Paris*.

The

Usher de  
Sept. Int.

The *English* had reason, when they preferred in their *Polyglot* the *Vatican* before the two others, to which they have added the various Readings of a Manuscript Copy of *Alexandria*, which they look upon to be very ancient. But I do not believe that we ought to approve of another Greek Edition of the Copy of the *Vatican*, which they have set down apart, reforming it according to their prejudices, and in changing the order of some Verses of Chapters, and even of whole Books, in imitation of the *German Protestants*, who had before done the same thing to the Edition of *Venice*. They have endeavoured to accommodate the order of the Greek Copy to their own sentiments, and the order of the Hebrew Text; and they have also introduced other alterations, which may easily be observed, in comparing this last Edition of *England*, with the Editions of *Rome* and *Paris*, and even with that which is in the *English Polyglot*, although something is also changed in that, especially the order of some Books which are put at the end of the whole Work, as *Apocrypha*. It is certain, notwithstanding that the Greek and especially the Roman Copy, which is here spoke of, makes not this distinction of *Apocryphal* Books. But *Walton* thought that it was more proper to put into one Volume all the Books which were not in the *Jewish Canon*; or in this he has rather follow'd the opinion of the *English Church*, who indeed permits those Books to be read in the Churches, but for all that does not believe they were writ by Prophets, or persons inspired by God. There is nevertheless before the Volume where these Books are contained, a true order mark'd out, which they keep in most other Bibles. This alteration seems not to be sincere, although it may in some sort be defended by the example of *Origen* and St. *Jerom*, who also chang'd the order of the Prophetic of *Jeremiah* in the Greek Copies, to make them better agree with the Hebrew, and also to take away the disorder which they thought was in this Prophetic. It would be more proper to observe these variations by Notes or particular Scholias, which might be placed in the margin of the Book, than to meddle with the body of the Text: Otherwise one might take the same liberty of reforming the Hebrew Text, where the order seems not always to be observed, if we reflect on the History we have already given in the beginning of this Work.

D •

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

*The several Opinions concerning the Septuagint Translation discuss'd. Examination of the Opinion of Vossius, wherein is shewn, that the Jews have not corrupted the Hebrew Text, as he pretends. Several Reflections upon the Chronology of the Holy Scripture, where it is shown, that the Septuagint is not better than the Hebrew Text.*

AS most men speak according to the Prejudices they are possessed with, or according to the Employments they are tyed to, it has happened that some Criticks, too much affected with the Hebrew Text at present, have thought that the ancient Septuagint Translation was wholly lost: Others who were perswaded there is some of it yet remaining, have said, that the Authors of this Translation understood not perfectly the Hebrew Tongue; and there are some who have not stuck to say, that the Septuagint had designedly perverted the sense of several passages of the Prophets. Others on the contrary have declared themselves more favourable to the Greek Translation than to the Hebrew Text, and have affirmed, that this Text was corrupted by the Jews, and that the Rabbins understood not the Hebrew Tongue. But no doubt there is a great deal of passion in all these Opinions, which fly to such extremities. I wonder not that the Jews of Jerusalem and of other places, opposite to the Hellenist Jews, have so violently cry'd down the Septuagint Translation, especially in the beginning of Christianity, by reason of the continual Disputes they had with the Christians of those Times. I wonder not also that some of our Doctors who have studied the Hebrew Tongue, and who have made Translations of the Bible from the Hebrew Text, have despised the Septuagint Translation, without having examined it. On the other side, it was impossible that the ancient Fathers, who only acknowledged the Septuagint Translation for Scripture, should have any esteem for the Hebrew Text, which was valued by none but the Jews, who read it in their Synagogues. We ought not therefore to rely upon the bare testimony of these Authors, who seem to treat of this matter according to the prejudices they lay under.

The

The Protestants, who have made their Translations from the Hebrew Text, have been oblig'd to maintain it, and to cry down the Septuagint, especially since Buxtorf has took so much pains to defend it, who for all that has not hindred the most learned and judicious Protestants from being moderate herein. Ludovicus Capellus, who writ a learned Criticism upon this Subject, had as many Followers as Buxtorf; and although he was also a Protestant, he forbore not seriously to examine the various Readings of the holy Scriptures, as one would examine other Books; and what is more remarkable in this Author is, that he shows throughout his whole Book a great deal of veneration for the Septuagint Translation, by which he sometimes corrects the Hebrew. Grotius and some other learned Protestants have observ'd the same moderation, and have esteem'd the Septuagint as highly as possibly they could, yet not so far as to destroy the Authority of the Hebrew Text. Walton has also shown, that he prefers the moderate Opinions of Catholics, before the Opinions of some Protestants who are excessively zealous; and he has shown himself more favourable to the Septuagint Translation than many Catholics, in which he has not always had reason, as we shall hereafter prove.

It had been well if Vossius, who has defended the Septuagint Translation in a Treatise to that purpose made, had been as moderate as these learned Protestants, and that he had not run into so great extremes, when he speaks of the present Hebrew Text. I confess he had reason to call many insignificant Protestant Doctors, Fools and Asses, who have too much respect for the Copies of the Magorah; but he ought not to have run into another extrem, as to the Septuagint, which Translation he will have wholly to be inspir'd by God. And to give greater Authority to it, he accuses the Jews of having designedly corrupted the Hebrew Text: He observes the time when this pretended corruption was made, and the Reasons which the Jews had for corrupting of their Copies, but he gives no Reason for so bold and improbable an Opinion. If there are faults in the present Hebrew Text, there are yet more in the Septuagint Translation; for besides that it has been lyable to most of those that are in the Hebrew, there are many others peculiar to it self; wherefore many seem to despair of reducing it to its purity, there is so much confusion in all the Greek Copies. To proceed, as the System of Vossius, concerning the Hebrew Text and Septuagint Translation, has made impression upon many people, by reason of his bold and free manner of writing, it is convenient for us to enquire more particularly into the truth.

D 2

Vossius

*Vossius.*

*Vossius* affirms, That the *Jews* in the Hebrew Text have designedly corrupted what relates to the Chronology, and the coming of the *Messias*; because according to him, the 6000 years after which they expected the *Messias*, being elaps'd, they have left out of their Copies 14 Ages to get 2000 years: And moreover, to take away the 5 or 6 other Ages which are above the number, they have left out of the same Copies the Intervals betwixt the Judges, passing over the Anarchies, and abridging the Inter-regnumis of the Kings of *Persia*. There is none but at first would think, that *Vossius* has clear and evident proofs for so free and circumstantial an Affirmation as this, and nevertheless he has nothing but the bare prejudice he has for the Septuagint. It is sufficient, if their Chronology agrees not in all places with that of the Hebrew Text, to conclude presently that the *Jews* have falsified the Hebrew Text. It is true, and we have already prov'd it, that we cannot wholly rely upon the present Hebrew Text in the making an exact Chronology; but we have at the same time shown, that neither the Greek Septuagint Translation, nor the Hebrew Samaritan Text, nor *Josephus*, nor, in a word, all the Chronology we have of the Bible, is sufficient to give us an exact account of the Ages which have pass'd since the Creation of the World. There are many vacant spaces, as I have already observ'd in the Chronology of the Scripture, which usually abridges things, to treat only of those which relate to the matter in hand. We shall not therefore accuse the *Jews* for having corrupted their Chronology out of design, but we may say, that in many places the Scripture is only a bare Abridgment. On the contrary, it is more probable, that the Greek Doctors who believed that the World was more ancient than appears from the Hebrew Text, have took the liberty of eeking out the time, specially upon the belief they had, that when the body of Canonical Scripture which we have was publish'd, the people had only given them what was thought necessary for them. But before we go further, we must particularly examine what little probability there is in the Reasons; or rather the Conjectures of *Vossius*.

If the *Jews* had had a design of corrupting the Copies, to put back the time of the *Messias*, as *Vossius* pretends, they would rather have corrupted the Prophecie of *Daniel*, which exactly points out the time, than the Books of *Moses*, which have no relation to this matter. It is therefore more probable, that the *Jews* have made no alteration in the Chronology of the Books of the Law, since they have let alone the Prophecie of *Daniel*, where the time of the *Messiah* is exactly

exactly cast up. I know that *Vossius* sayes, that the ancient Jews *Vossius.* acknowledge not *Daniel* for a true Prophet; but as we have already shewn the ancient Jews differ not in this from the Modern, and it is certain, that the Book of *Daniel* was always reckoned by them amongst the Divine and Canonical Writings, they never doubted but that it contained Prophecies, although they allow not *Daniel* the Title of Prophet. All this difficulty arises only from the name, and the difference only lyes in the method and order the Jews observed in the division of the Holy Scriptures, but they do not, for all that, deny but there are Prophecies in the Books of *David* and *Daniel*, although they reckon them only among the *Hagiographies*, which they call *Cetuvim* or Writings.

Moreover *Vossius* at the same time is obliged to accuse the Samaritans as well as the Jews, of having for the same reasons corrupted their Hebrew Copies, and yet it is certain that the Samaritans agree not altogether with the Jews in their account. He acknowledges that the Jews have cut off but Six Ages before the Flood, whereas the Samaritans according to him have cut off Nine, but as they agree in the general account from *Moses* to our Saviour, he from thence concludes that they have also for the same reason corrupted their Copies. I believe that we ought rather to conclude the contrary, that the Chronology of the Hebrew Text is better than the Septuagint, since it is confirmed by the Copy of the Samaritans, whom we cannot suspect of collusion with the Jews in this matter.

*Africanus*, *Eusebius*, and the other Fathers who have made mention of this variety of Chronology, are of a contrary opinion with *Vossius*, and they look upon it only as the divers readings of the same Original, without accusing either the Jews or Samaritans. They had much more reason for doing it in that time, when they lookt upon the Septuagint Translation, as the only authentick and Divine Scripture. *Justin Martyr* who accused the Jews for having corrupted the Scripture in some places which relate to the *Messiah* never blamed them for having changed any thing in the Chronology. *African.* *Euseb.*

As for a certain Tradition ascribed to the Family of *Elias*, concerning 6000 years the World was to last, it would not deserve our consideration if *Vossius* himself had not took notice of it, and from thence pretended to draw a consequence favourable to his opinion. These 6000 years which contain, as the Jews say in their *Talmud*, 2000 years of Inanity, that is to say before the Law, 2000 years from *Elias.*

*Treat. Sanhedrim. Avodazara Talmud.* from the Law, and 2000 years from the *Messiah*, are only a simple Allegory which these Doctors have recounted in the Treatises *Sanhedrim* and *Avoda, Zara*, which has no appearance of truth. Supposing this Tradition to be true, it wholly ruins the Principles of *Vossius*, since the Jews in the same places of the *Talmud* which we have just now recited, ingenuously acknowledge that the 2000 years there mentioned are past, without the *Messiah's* (whom they expected at that time) being come. Then they add, that the time of the *Messiah* has been deferred because of their sins. Whence it is easie to conclude, that they were so far from having corrupted their Copies to put back the time of the *Messiah*, that they have made no scruple to acknowledge, that according to the account of their own Copies, the *Messiah* ought to have come at the end of the 2000 years of the Law.

*Talmud.* To which we may add, that the Chronology of the Jews, as it is in the present Hebrew Text, agrees better with this pretended Prophecy of *Elias*, than the computation of the Septuagint. The Jews count from the Creation to the Law of *Moses* 2448 years, and they make these two thousand years of Inanity or before the Law, to end at the time when *Abraham* received the Law. The Septuagint reckons according to *Vossius's* account, 3953 years from the Creation to the Law of *Moses*. And to make their Chronology the better agree with their Prejudices, he makes this account to begin not from the Creation, but from the Deluge. He observes not that even in the *Talmud*, the Prophecie of six thousand years, is grounded only upon an Allusion to the six days of the Creation of the World. For these Doctors affirm, that as the World was created in six days, it will last six thousand years, whence it manifestly appears, that this computation includes all the time the World is to last, even from the Creation. If then with *Vossius* we rely upon this pretended Prophecy of *Elias*, we may easilier explain it by following the Chronology of the Jews, than that of the Septuagint: Besides that the Jews have been so far from falsifying their Copies, as to the Chronology, that they might not be confuted about the coming of the *Messias*, that on the contrary in reckoning up the allotted time they have in the *Talmud*, acknowledged that it was already past. I shall not confute *Vossius's* reasons, to show that the time here mentioned, ought to be counted but from the Deluge, forasmuch as his reasons are of no validity. In a word, he ought Infallibly to have shown, that the Jews have designedly abridged their Chronology, instead of suppo-

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sing it without any proof. It might perhaps be more reasonable to say, that the Septuagint have augmented the number of years in their Chronology, for the reasons we have already alledged.

Nevertheless I agree with *Vossius*, that it is impossible to make an exact Chronology from the Books of the Holy Scripture as it is at present, and that we are necessarily to have recourse for that to prophane Authors, because the Holy Writers relate only but what is necessary for their design. But we ought not to conclude with *Vossius*, that the Chronology of the Septuagint is better than that of the Jewish Text, although it comes nigher the computation of prophane Authors. It may be, as I have already said, that the Greek Translators took the liberty of enlarging the Chronology of the Hebrew Text, which they looked upon as too much abridged: and it is more reasonable to prefer the Original before Translations, than Translations before the Original. We are therefore to suppose it impossible to make an exact and true Chronology from the Holy Scripture. For example the Chronology of the Judges, as it is set down in the Book so called, and that of the Kings of *Persia*, is not at all exact, either in the Hebrew Text, or in the Septuagint Translation. Some Jewish Doctors who would make an entire Chronology of the Kings of *Persia*, from what is contained in the Bible, have made themselves ridiculous. On the contrary, the other Jews who have consulted our Books and prophane Authors, affirm that the Scripture in those places, mentions only the Kings of *Persia* who favoured the Jews; *St. Jerom* has also followed the same method in his Commentaries upon the Prophecie of *Daniel*, where he relies not wholly upon what is writ in the Text of this Prophet, but has recourse to other Authors; and he makes it plainly appear, that if we understand not prophane Histories, it is impossible for us to explain the Books of the Prophets.

As then we cannot with reason say, that the Jews have corrupted the Chronology of *Daniel*, and some other places of the Scripture, but that it is only abridged; so likewise we cannot say that the Jews have corrupted the Chronology of the Pentateuch, and other Historical Books of the Bible, where it is not set down in large. We cannot however affirm, that there are no faults in the Hebrew Text, since the Jewish Transcribers have not been free from those errors into which other Transcribers have often fallen; and the same may be said of the Samaritan Transcribers, who in this have not been more Infallible than the Jews.

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When we have not the Originals, upon which one may ground the truth of the Copies which are taken from them, we have still reason to doubt. *Josephus Scaliger*, who was perswaded that there were some faults crept into the Holy Scriptures, as to the Chronology, believed that the Jews did not write their numbers at length, as they do at present, but that they only made use of the Letters of their Alphabet instead of Cyphers, according to the manner of the Greeks. Many Authors have been of this opinion, which appeared so much the more probable, in that the Jews observe at this day the same custom in their Books. Now there is nothing more easie, than to set down one letter instead of another, which might be the cause of some alteration of the numbers which are set down in the Holy Scriptures, after the same manner as in all other Books. Nevertheless, I do not see any evident proof of this way of writing the years in the Hebrew Text of the Bible, by Letters or Cyphers: On the contrary we find, that the numbers are written at length in the most antient Manuscripts; and without being distinguished from the rest of the discourse. So that we have reason to believe, that the usual way the Jews now use in their other Books, is not very ancient. Besides, the reason why the Jewish Transcribers were oftner mistaken in writing the years, than the other words of the Text, is, because the words by which they make use of for to count their years by, are almost alike, and repeated several times, as we have shewn elsewhere: whereupon they are confounded, and consequently fall into a mistake. It will suffice to bring here one example taken from the 23 Chapter of *Genesis*, Verse 21. where we read in the Hebrew Text, *Hajé Sara mea Sana ve Efrim Sana ve Seva Sanim je né Hajé Sara*, where we see a frequent Repetition of the same words, whereas we see nothing of all these Repetitions in the Septuagint or Vulgar Translations, but simply (*Sara* lived an hundred and twenty seven years) for this reason, *St. Epiphanius* rejects *Aquila's* Translation as rude and barbarous, because he translated in these places, the Hebrew Text *Verbatim*, without changing any thing at all of these Repetitions of the same words.

It is therefore probable, that the Transcribers, as well Jews as Samaritans, might be sometimes deceived in the setting down of the years, because one word so often repeated, in one and the same Period, did perplex their imagination. And this we see happens dayly, when the same case occurs, and we have hereupon produced several examples taken from Hebrew Manuscripts. But whereas the reason of

of this alteration proceeds from the nature of the Hebrew Text, and that on the other side, the Septuagint have made their Translation from a Copy of this Text; and not from the Original, it cannot be freer from these faults, than the *Jewish* Hebrew Copies.

To proceed: Although the *Jews* be very ignorant in whatsoever concerns either History or Chronology, yet we find some amongst them, who are not wholly ignorant of the Matter above-mentioned. The Author of the Book, entituled *Jubasin*, speaking of *Bous*, and of *Qbed*, Father to *Jesse*, and Grandfather to *David*, tells us, that according to the prophane Writers, there have been other Generations which are omitted in the Scripture; adding afterwards, that it may be these prophane Authors drew their opinion from the very Books of the Scripture, where they sometimes omit whole Genealogies, passing from one Genealogy to another, which is at a great distance from it, without meddling with those which are between both. The same Author instances in *Esdra's*, who in his Book has omitted seven Genealogies, from one *Ahitob* to another. It is certain that the ancient *Jews*, not finding in their Histories Genealogies enough to fill up the time, made one single person to live during many Ages: Wherefore there is nothing more common in their Histories, than these long liv'd men. Besides, in the same place of the Book *Jubasin* we are told, that *Obadiab*, there spoke of, according to the Authors of the *Cabbale* or Tradition, lived 400 years, & *Rash* till the time of *Salomon*; and this agrees with one of their ancient Books, called *Tanhumas*. We ought therefore to reflect upon this Principle, that we may not so easily give belief to the *Jewish* Histories, which make their Doctors survive, till such time as they can find another to joyn to him. I speak here only of those *Jewish* Doctors, who lived after the Captivity of *Babylon*, and not of the ancient Patriarchs, although it appears that some *Jews* have also called in question the great number of years which are given them in the Books of *Moser*. Thus *R. Gedalia*, in the beginning of his History, where he makes mention of several opinions touching this Matter, avers that there were some who believed, that one of our years contained ten of those other years, which *St. Augustine* was not unacquainted with; as may be seen in his Books of the *City of God*.

Other Authors following the same *Gedalia* have affirm'd, that the Patriarchs liv'd no longer than other men, and that the holy Scripture makes only mention of the head of the Family, with whom he immediately joyns the last of the same Family, without taking notice of

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those who have been between both. These Authors believe, as has been already observ'd, that when any head of a Family has ordain'd certain Laws and Methods of living to the Family, they make him live until the last of the Family who has observ'd these Laws be dead; in so much that he is suppos'd to have liv'd all this while in his Family. *R. Gedalia* says further, That according to the Opinion of these same Doctors, the Patriarchs did not live so long before they had Children as the Scripture speaks of, but that it makes mention of those only from whom they receiv'd the Tradition, taking no notice of many others whom there was no necessity of meddling withal.

I am not of opinion, that a man should or ought to rely upon these kind of Niceties, but hereby one may perceive, that the *Jews*, who have so great a veneration for the holy Scriptures, do notwithstanding make their Conjectures upon the Age of their first Patriarchs, as if the Text of the Scripture was not clear enough in these places. They are furthermore perswaded, that these Genealogies are abridg'd, although they build their Chronology thereupon, without having any other Reason but their Tradition, which they often prefer before known and constant Truths. However we must not infer from thence, that the *Jews* have corrupted their Text, nor that they have purposely abridg'd these Genealogies; and besides it signifies very little as to Religion, whether we can build a certain Chronology upon the Text of Scripture or no: We may openly confess, that some faults have crept in upon this Subject, and acknowledge with *St. Augustine*, that these kind of difficulties are of the nature of those of which we may speak freely, and which we may also be ignorant of. *Idem contra Pelag. & Cal. Idem quest. in Gen. cap. 2. lib. 15. de Civ. Dei, c. 13.* *Salva fide qua Christiani sumus.* The same Father speaking of the years of *Metusalem*, has recourse to the Hebrew Original, and affirms; that in that place most of the Greek Copies of his time were corrupted. He does not only consult the Hebrew Text, which he sometimes prefers before the Septuagint, but he also makes mention of the Syriack Translation, and in a word searches after the truth, without tying himself too scrupulously to the Septuagint Translation, although that only was at that time accounted authentick and divine. For this reason we ought not to rely upon the judgement of the *Jews*, who acknowledg'd no other to be the true Scripture but the Hebrew Text of the Bible, nor to that of some Christians, who consult only the Septuagint. We must not side either with the Hebrew or the Septuagint, nor yet with the Vulgar, which the Council of *Trent* has not thought to be free from all kind of faults; but we ought indifferently

to make use of as well the Text as the Translations, and to judge of them according to the Rules of Criticism. The Latin Church has notwithstanding all possible respect for the Vulgar, and allows it all the Authority which the Fathers of the Council attributed to it. Those are mistaken, in my opinion, who believe we must not admit of the least fault in the Books of the Scripture, as if men had not been the Depositories of that as well as of all other Books.

Besides, supposing the Principles, which we have already laid down, concerning the manner of the collecting of the holy Scriptures, we may distinguish the confusion which we sometimes find in the Chronology of the Bible, from the Errors of Chronology, which have happened through the fault of the Transcribers. It is usual for those who collect out of Records, to make mention simply of the principal Actions, without troubling themselves too solicitously about the time when they happen'd; and it would without question be rash for any one to go about to reform these Collections, by making a more exact Chronology. The Interpreters of the Scripture, which do not make all these Reflections, are often mistaken, and sometimes make themselves ridiculous, under pretence of giving a purely literal sense. For example, Shall we say that *Cain* and *Abel* were born at the same time, because the story of the Birth of these two Brothers is related in Chap. 4. of *Genesis*, as if *Eve* had been brought to bed of both of them at one and the same time? those who are acquainted with the style of the Scripture, and with its concise ways of speaking, do not fall into such gross Errors. Wherefore *Gordon* had reason to say that *Calvin* doted, when he said that *Cain* and *Abel* were Twins. *Gemellos*, ad cap. 4. *Gen.* says this Jesuit, *fingit Calvinus fuisse Cain & Abel, sed somniat.* If we once understood this Principle, we shou'd not ground so easily as we do, a whole Chronology upon the Text of the Bible, but consult diligently the Chronology of other Nations, without relying wholly upon it; because it is certain, that most of the first Originals are fill'd with Fables. We should not believe, for example, the History of the *Sabaites*, which we have spoke of before, who reckon, according to the testimony of some Authors, above 372000 years since the Creation of the first Man, whom also they call *Adam*, although according to the same Authors they make mention in their Books of two *Adams*.

## CHAP. V.

*Judgement of the Greek Septuagint Translation. A particular Examination of the places where they have translated the Hebrew otherwise than they do at present.*

**T**Here have been some learned men even among the Catholics, who have held that the Authors of the Greek Septuagint Translation had not a perfect knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue. *Augustine de Engubio* has gone yet further, for he has not stuck to call the Septuagint, *Ignorant persons*, and concludes from the ignorance he taxes them with, that it was absolutely necessary for the Church, that *St. Jerom* should make a new Translation of the Bible, more faithful and more exact than the ancient one. He assures us moreover, that these Greek Interpreters understood not sufficiently either the Hebrew or Greek; that they had other Hebrew Copies than *St. Jerom* had; and withal that they have affected a particular way in many places of their Translation. But this Author who some Protestants have follow'd, is mistaken in his opinion of the Septuagint; and it may easily be prov'd by his own Books, that he understood neither Hebrew nor Greek well enough, or that he would not do the Septuagint justice, which he has so unadvisedly condemn'd.

The most learned of the Protestants have spoke much better of the Septuagint Translation than this Italian Bishop, and amongst other *Ludovicus Capellus*, whose judgment in this case ought to be prefer'd before *Augustines*. This learned Protestant affirms, that we should have had a great deal of trouble to have restor'd the Hebrew Tongue, without the help of the Greek Septuagint, although there are some faults in that as well as in all other Translations of the Bible. *Vossius* has not been contented with praising of this ancient Translation, but he has, (as one may say) canoniz'd it, in looking upon it as inspir'd by God; in which he seems not to have kept all due moderation, since it has its faults as well as other Translations. *Masius*, who has diligently examin'd it, and who without doubt was capable of judging of it, has observ'd, that the Greek Translation of the Books of the Law differs from that of the other Books of the Bible, and that these last are

are so ill translated in some places, that we have no reason to think them translated by the Septuagint. And for fear of being thought to judge of the Greek Translation by the Hebrew at present, he says, that he speaks not of the Hebrew Text as it is at present with the Points, instead of Vowels and Accents, which may have alter'd the Text. Lastly, He concludes that this Translation is divine in some places, and very silly in others; but as that sometimes happens in the Book of *Moses*, he is apt to believe that *Ptolemy* caus'd all the Books of the Scripture to be translated; and therefore he dares affirm nothing hereupon, he meets with so many difficulties herein. He only confesses that there are many faults, and much corruption in this Translation as it is at present; the respect he has for Antiquity, has hindred him from declaring freely his opinion upon this Subject. But without searching too curiously into the several Opinions of Authors upon the Septuagint, it is more proper to examine the Translation itself by the Hebrew Text.

To judge herein aright, we ought to recollect what we have already said of the Hebrew Text in the first Book of this Work, that we may not condemn the Septuagint, when we do not always find it agree with the present Hebrew Text. We ought not also wholly to limit the sense of the Hebrew words, either by the new Dictionaries or Grammars; and moreover, as the Greeks have not always understood the Language of the Septuagint, they have in some places corrected their Translations, to make them more intelligible Greek. Lastly, The Transcribers have also introduc'd some Errors, which we ought to consider in judging rightly of the Septuagint Translation. Let us now examine it more particularly, and compare it with the modern Interpreters. We will begin with the first Chapter of *Genesis*.

The Septuagint have in the first Verse of this Chapter, translated *Gen. 2. 2.* the Verb *Bara* by *ἔποιον*, which signifies *Fecit*, whereas the modern Interpreters translate it *Creavit*, as the Vulgar does. This Translation of the Septuagint seems to insinuate, that the World was not created out of nothing; and some Greek Authors, amongst whom is *St. Basil*, seem, for this very Reason, to have made another invisible World before this; and to prove it, they bring the Greek Verb, which signifies *Made*, and not *Created*. We cannot however accuse the Septuagint of having ill translated the Hebrew word *Bara*; and if we now make it signify any thing else than to *Make*, that rather proceeds from the common belief of the World being created, than from the

*Rabbins* the propriety of the Hebrew word. The most learned *Rabbins* agree with the Septuagint in the explanation of this word, as we may see in the Commentaries of *Aben Ezra* upon this place. *Augustine* of *Eugubio*, who sometimes very improperly corrects the Septuagint, approves of their Translation of this place, and gives the same Reasons as *Aben Ezra* does. Nevertheless *Lombroso* and some other *Jews* say, that the Hebrew Verb here us'd; commonly signifies to Create, or Make out of Nothing; and that another Verb is made use of to signify to Make or Form. But *Aben Ezra* proves the contrary by many Examples, in the same History of the Creation, where the Verb *bara* cannot signify to Create. In the 5th. Verse of the same Chapter, where it is in the Hebrew, *Tobu Vabihu*, and in the Vulgar, *Inanis & Vacua*, the Septuagint have translated, *ἀόρατος, & ἀγασκένευστος*, which seems to confirm the Ancients opinion of the Chaos, as if the visible World had been made of an invisible Matter, and that it had then no Being or particular Form. It is however hard to translate the Hebrew into Greek better, than by alluding to the Chaos of the Ancients.

*Gen. 1. 6.* In the 6th. Verse, where the Vulgar has it *Firmamentum*, the Septuagint have translated it, *στέρωμα*, which signifies the same. But the modern Interpreters will have this word to signify *Extent*, and not *Firmament*. *Father Morin*, and besides him an English Protestant, have largely justifi'd the Septuagint Translation of this place, which they prefer before the modern ones. However after having seriously examin'd the Matter, I am of opinion, that the Septuagint have translated the Hebrew word according to the Syriack then spoke at *Jerusalem*, rather than according to the Hebrew; for the Hebrew word signifies in Syriack to be *Firm* or *Solid*.

*Gen. 1. 17.* In the 17th. Verse the Vulgar has it, *Ut præsset*; the Septuagint use the word *ἀρχαίς*, which is equivocal, and may be explain'd either *Commandment* or *Beginning*. This has deceiv'd many Greek Authors, who have taken it in the latter sence. As the Septuagint Translation is sometimes barbarous, it is impossible for us to understand it thoroughly, without having some knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue, and then we ought to prefer the clearest of the new Translations.

*Gen. 2. 2.* In the 2d. Chapter of *Genesis* and Verse 2d. whereas it is in the Hebrew Text, (*God ended the seventh day*) the Septuagint have translated, (*He ended the sixth day*) which seems to be better sence, and is back'd by the Samaritan Hebrew Text. I do not however think it necessary to reform the Hebrew Text in this place by the Septuagint, nor yet the Septuagint by the Hebrew Text, as *Augustine* of *Eugubio* has

has affirm'd. We have no evident proof that either one or the other is in an error, and therefore we ought to look upon them as two different Readings, chiefly by reason of the Samaritan Copy.

In Chap. 3. Verse 14. the Septuagint have translated, *ἐπιματάρατ' ὅτι ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν κυνῶν*, where the Vulgar has it, *Maledictus es inter omnia animantia*; the Greek word *ἀπὸ*, which the Septuagint uses in this place, is no proper word, nor makes any sence. But as the Septuagint have translated sometimes word for word, without heeding whether the Greek words were proper in those places they put them in, we ought to translate the Greek Preposition *ἀπὸ*, by the French Article *De*, which in our Language signifies several things, it not being always a real Article, and then the sence will be, *Thou art the most cursed of all Animals*.

In the 15th Verse of the same Chapter, where we read, *αὐτὸς σὺ πηήσεις κφάλην*, there are two manifest Errors of the Transcribers: First, Instead of *αὐτὸς*, in the Masculine, we ought to read *αὐτὸ*, in the Neuter; and this Error comes from the words not being far enough distant one from the other in the ancient Manuscript Copies; so that the Transcribers have often put the Letters of the following words to the end of the preceding words, which has been done in this place; and to remedy these faults, we have no way but going to the Hebrew. For example: In *Isaiab*, Chap. 17. Verse 10. where in the Septuagint we read, *φύτωμα ἀπιστον*, we ought to read it clear contrary, *φύτωμα πιστον*, and in the Latin, *Plantationem fidelem*, and not *infidelem*, as it was in the ancient Vulgar before *St. Jerom*. The 2d. Error of the Transcriber is in *πηήσεις*, instead of which we ought to read, *τηρήσεις*, because the Transcribers have put an *Iota* in the place of an *Epsilon*, because the shape of the Letter *Iota*, is like that of an *Epsilon Iota*. Thus the Bible of *Alcala*, or *Complute*, has been corrected, although *Vossius* has alter'd it another way. We find other Examples in the Scripture of this same Error of Transcribers; as in *Proverbs*, Chap. 15. Verse 14. where we read in the Edition of *Rome*, *συντησῶν αὐτήν*, (*Preserving it*) whereas the Hebrew word which signifies to *Corrupt*, makes me think that it was before, *φθείρων αὐτήν*, (*Corrupting it*) and the sence of this Verse is clearly otherwise than it is in the Septuagint Translation, which the Greeks have chang'd in many places which they understood not; and as they had not the Originals to go to, they have corrected it according to their own fancies.

In Chap. 4. Verse 7. where the Vulgar has it, *Si bene egeris, recipies, sin autem male, statim in foribus peccatum aderit*; the Septuagint differs

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differs very much from all the other Translations made from the Hebrew. *Vossius* however had reason in saying, that the sense of the Septuagint is proper enough. To which we may add, that it would not be difficult to explain that Translation of this place, according to the Grammatical sense. It is word for word in the Hebrew, *If thou dost well*, and the Septuagint have translated, *If you offer well*, which is the same. The Hebrew Verb *secth*, signifies to *lift up*; now it is certain that throughout the whole Law of *Moses*, to *lift up* and *offer* are synonymous terms. This Exposition is much more natural than that of the *Rabbins* and the modern Translators, who agree not amongst themselves about the Interpretation of this word. As for the other words of the same Verse they may be translated according to the Letter, (*If thou hast not done well in Breaking*) that is to say, *If thou art not well divided*, as it is in the Septuagint; which seems to be better sense than if the Verb *Petab* was translated *Bear*, as *St. Jerom* and the modern Interpreters have translated it, since it is certain that the word *Petab* signifies also to *break and pull in pieces*. Lastly, The Septuagint have translated, *If thou hast sin'd*, whereas the modern Interpreters translate, *The sin*; where the Vowels are only chang'd in this word as well as in the word following, which they have translated, (*Repose thy self*) by reading of the Verb in the Imperative Mood, instead of the Participle. Thus the Septuagint Translation may in this place be justifi'd, which the modern Translators, who trouble themselves too much about the Points and Accents, have condemn'd, for want of understanding of it.

Gen. 4. 16. Hieron Quæst. Heb. in Gen. In Verse 16. of the same Chap. 4. *St. Jerom* has found fault with the Septuagint, for having translated, *In the Land of Naid*, as if *Naid* was a proper Name, whereas they ought, as he says, to have translated, *Profugus, a Vagabond*. We cannot however accuse the Septuagint of ignorance, since in Verse 12. of the same Chapter, where this Hebrew word also is, they have not translated it by a proper Name. They thought then that here it ought to be translated otherwise, and that *Cain* had given the Name of *Naid* to this Land, as if one should say, *A Land of Exile*. I should however rather prefer *St. Jerom's* Translation, which the modern Interpreters do also follow, before the Septuagint.

Gen. 4. 12. In Verse 12. of the same Chapter, where the Vulgar has, *Iste cepit invocare Nomen Domini*; the Septuagint have translated, (*He hop'd to call upon.*) These two Translations disagree with the present Hebrew, from whence we ought to translate, *Then began men to call upon*; and thus

Gen. 4. 26. In Verse 26. of the same Chapter, where the Vulgar has, *Iste cepit invocare Nomen Domini*; the Septuagint have translated, (*He hop'd to call upon.*) These two Translations disagree with the present Hebrew, from whence we ought to translate, *Then began men to call upon*; and thus

thus *St. Jerom* has translated in his *Questions upon Genesis*; and *Hieron* therefore he read the Hebrew as we do at present. *Aquila* confirms *Aquila*, the present Reading, which seems to be better than that of the Septuagint.

In Chap. 6. Verse 3. where the Septuagint have translated, *My spirit shall not endure*, other modern Interpreters translate, *My spirit shall not strive*, or *shall not judge*; and *St. Jerom* approves of this last Translation: But the Septuagint Translation which the Vulgar also sticks too, is the best and most natural. We ought not however to fancy this to be a various Reading in the Hebrew Text, as some have imagin'd, who thought that the Septuagint have in their Copies read *Jalon* instead of *Jadon*; one may very well translate, *Jadon endur'd*, deducing it from *Madan*; and this opinion is back'd with the Authority of some *Rabbins*, who in this agree with the Septuagint. Hieron Quæst. Heb. in Gen.

In Verse 14. of the same Chapter, where we read in the Hebrew, *Make an Ark of Gopher wood*, the Septuagint have translated it *of square wood*; which seems ridiculous to some, although they cannot tell the true signification of the word *Gopher*, which is us'd in no other place but this. *Vossius*, who would explain the meaning of the Septuagint, quotes *Theophrastus*, who makes mention of a Tree with four Angles, without telling what he meant by this Tree with four Angles, which *Vossius* fancies to be the *Pine, Fir, the Cedar*, or some such Tree fit to build Ships with. To maintain his opinion he farther adds, there are only these Trees, whose Branches grow as if they had four Arms, and as many Angles, so that they are in form of a Cross. But without being so very nice, it is probable the Septuagint meant only by these words, the Planks which we build Ships with, because these Planks are sawn and cut after such a fashion, that we may call them, *ζύλα τετάγωνα*. Thus God commanded *Noah* to take Trees, and therewith to build the Ark. These Planks have four Angles; and I believe the reason why the Septuagint gave them this Name, was to distinguish them from Trees, which in growing are round. This sense differs not from what is in the Vulgar, where they are call'd, *Woods made smooth*, that is to say, cut or sawn, fit to build Ships with. Let us now examine some places in the Septuagint, where the Hebrew Text is more obscure; for they are suppos'd to be mistaken chiefly in those places.



## CHAP. VI.

Examination of the Septuagint Translation of the 49th.  
Chap. of Genesis, and comparing of this Translation  
with the modern ones made from the present Hebrew.

Gen. 49. 3. **I**N Chap. 49<sup>th</sup> of Genesis, Verse 3<sup>d</sup>, the Septuagint have translated these Hebrew words, *Rescit oni*, (*The beginning of my Children*) whereas the modern Interpreters have translated them (*The beginning of my strength or vigor*) and some with *Aquila* and the Vulgar have translated (*The beginning of my Grief.*) The Septuagint have rather express'd the sense of the Hebrew words, than the words of the Text, according to the Grammatical sense; and this way of speaking in other places of the Scripture is taken for the *First-born*. St. Jerom also approves of this Interpretation, in his Hebrew Questions upon Genesis.

In the same Verse, where the Vulgar has it, *Prior in Donis*, the Septuagint seems to take these words in an ill sense, contrary to the common opinion of other Translators, as if *Reuben* had been an obstinate man, and hardned in his sin, and for that cause his Birth-right had been taken from him. This sense agrees well enough with what follows; but it is not so Grammatical a one, as that of the modern Interpreters, who however are at difference amongst themselves, about the explaining of the Hebrew words.

Gen. 49. 4. The Septuagint have also follow'd only the sense of the words of Verse 4. (*Swift as Water*) which they have afterwards again observ'd, for as much as the Grammatical sense could not express the things there spoken of. Wherefore I shall stay no longer upon these varieties of Translation, which are besides our purpose. We shall only observe, that in other places the Septuagint Translation follows barely the words rather than the sense, so that it is not always consonant with it self.

Gen. 49. 5. In Verse 5. where the Vulgar has *Vasa iniquitatis*, according to the present Hebrew, the Septuagint have translated, *They have finish'd the iniquity together*. This variety of Interpretation proceeds from a various Reading, because the Septuagint read in their Hebrew Copy an *V*,

an *V*, where we at present read an *I*, which very often happens; and as at that time there were no Points in the Hebrew Text, they read with other Points or Vowels. To conclude, the Septuagint sense is more neat and less perplex, than that of the modern Interpreters.

In Verse 6. where we read in the Vulgar, *Non sit Gloria mea*, the Septuagint have translated, *Let not my Liver contend*. The present Hebrew is the same with the Vulgar, and ought to be translated word for word, *Let not mine Honour be united*. But the Septuagint have put other Vowel Points, and read *Cevodi*, *My Liver*, instead of *Cevodi*, *My Honour*. And besides by reading a *Resch* for a *Daleth*, they have translated, *Dispute not*, or *Fret not thy self*. These two Letters *Resch* and *Daleth* are so alike in the Hebrew Tongue, that one has often much ado to distinguish them; however the reading of the present Hebrew Text, seems to make better sense than that of the Hebrew Copy of the Septuagint.

At the end of the same Verse, where the Vulgar has it, *Suffodentur Murum*, the Septuagint have translated, *They have Ham-string'd an Ox*. The modern Interpreters disagree about the explanation of these words. Some follow the Vulgar, and others say, *Have carri'd away an Ox*. The reason of this difference in Translation is, because the Hebrew word which signifies a *Wall*, signifies also an *Ox*, by changing only a little Point; and these two words are confounded in several other places of the Scripture, where the sense has been more observ'd than the manner of their being writ. To proceed, I am of opinion we ought to prefer the Septuagint Translation of this place before all others, and it is confirm'd by Verse 6. Chap. 11. of *Joshua*, where there is the same expression. Besides we are to observe, that the custom of taking of Oxen, and cutting of their Hams with a Lance, is yet us'd in some places.

In Verse 9. the Vulgar has it, *Ad predam*; and in the Hebrew it is word for word, *Ex preda*; the Septuagint have translated it, *ἐκ βλαστῶν*, from a *Plant*; the Hebrew word signifies either *Prey* or *Plant*, although the latter signification seems rather to be according to the Chaldee or Syriack, than the Hebrew. The sense of the vulgar and modern Interpreters is more natural, and seems to agree best with that place. It is probable that the Septuagint meant, that *Judab* was come from a little Plant, as if this Tribe had had but a small beginning, and that afterwards by little and little it grew greater than the others.

Gen. 49. 10 The modern Interpreters have not criticis'd more upon any word, than the Hebrew word *Silo*, which is in Verse 10. of the same Chapter. The Vulgar has translated it, *Qui mittendus est*, and those who have made Commentaries upon the Scripture, whether *Jews* or *Christians*, usually explain it of the *Messiah*. The Septuagint in this place has it, τὰ ἀποκείμενα ὑπὸ, or as some read it, ὅ ἀποκείταν, and this last reading seems more neat and agreeable to the Letter of the Hebrew Text. The sence of these words is, *For whom is kept*, and we ought to understand the word *Kingdom*; which words evidently denote the *Messiah*; and many of the most ancient *Jews* agree herein with the Septuagint, although the reading of the present Hebrew is a little different, because it is there *Silo*, whereas according to this Interpretation we ought to read *Selo*. This explanation of this passage is very clear; so that it is only the prejudice we have for the *Massoret*, and the modern *Grammar*, which has made this place obscure. We may then observe, that before Points were us'd instead of Vowels in the Hebrew Text of the Bible, the Letter *Jod* serv'd instead of the Vowels *J* and *E*; but after the finding out of these Points, the Transcribers left the Letter *Jod*, and such other Letters in the Text, or blotted them out according to their pleasure, as I have already shown in the first Book. The *Massoret* read this word with an *J*, instead of an *E*, and the Letter *Jod* has been still kept in, which has made the sence more difficult. Many other unnecessary *Jods* have been also left in other places of the Scripture, as in *Exodus*, where we read *Tease* with a *Jod*, which ought to have been left out. We may also observe, that the Letter *He*, which is at the end of the word *Silo*, or rather *Selo*, is the same with the Letter *Vau*; and this happens so often in the Hebrew Text, that the *Massoret* has mark'd the places where the Letter *He* is us'd for *Vau*, although it has not mark'd them all.

Gen. 49. 14 In Verse 14. where the Vulgar has it, as it is in the present Hebrew, *Asinus fortis*, the Septuagint have translated, *Hus wish'd for what is good*. They have in their Hebrew Copy read *Hamad*, *Hus desir'd*, instead of *Hamor*, *An Ass*. But there is nothing more usual than this changing of *Resch* into *Daleth*, by reason of the likeness of these two Letters.

Gen. 49. 15 In Verse 15. where the Vulgar has translated, *Tributis serviens*, the Septuagint have, *Is become a Husbandman*, which Translation makes a proper sence enough, and agrees with *Aquila*. The reason of this variety in the Translations is, because the same Hebrew word signifies *to be subjected*, and *to till the Earth*.

In Verse 18. where it is in the Vulgar, *Salutare tuum expectabo* Gen. 49. 18 *Domine*, according to the present Hebrew, the Septuagint have made a clear contrary sence, by applying of these words to the word *Horseman*, which goes before; and they have translated, *Waiting for the Salvation of the Lord*, as if it was to be understood of the Rider which is fallen. *St. Jerom* explains it of *Jacob*, and his Interpretation is follow'd by many, both *Jews* and *Christians*, who agree not however about the sence. Hieron. Quæst. Heb. in Gen.

In Verse 19. where it is in the Vulgar, *Gad accinctus praliabitur* Gen. 49. 19 *ante eum*, the Septuagint have translated it, Γὰδ περιστήθειον περιπαύσει αὐτόν, which by the Author of the ancient Vulgar made from the Septuagint, has been very ill translated thus, *Tentatio tentabit eum*. But *St. Jerom* has much better interpreted the Greek words, which in that place are barbarous, which he has made another sence to, *Gad Latrunculus latrocinabitur eum*; and then the Greek Septuagint agrees with the Hebrew Text, and the difficulty is clear'd; only they who understand the Hebrew Tongue, can correct these faults in the Greek Translation.

In Verse 21. where the Vulgar has it, *Nephtalis cervus emissus*, the Septuagint have translated it rather according to the sence than to the Grammar, *A Plant which has sprung forth*. *St. Jerom* also sometimes follows this method, and translates the same words in his Questions upon *Genesis*, *Ager irriguus*, following in this the opinion of the *Jewish Doctor*, who taught him not according to the Letter; so likewise in the same place he joyns the literal Translation which is in the Vulgar. Hieron.

In Verse 22. where the Vulgar has it translated, *Decorus aspectu*, Gen. 49. 22 the Septuagint have, Ζηλωτός, which signifies, *Sought after by reason of his beauty*; and this sence comes nigh the Hebrew. The same word which *St. Jerom* and the other Interpreters translate *A Well*, signifies also *An Eye*; the Septuagint have paraphras'd upon it, to make the sence more easie. There is much more difficulty in the following words; for instead of saying, *Banoth tsaada alesur*, as it is at present in the Hebrew, they have read, *Beni tseiri alai sub*, that is to say, *My young Son turn towards me*; which differs much from the present Hebrew Text, according to which we ought to translate as it is in the Vulgar, *Filie discurrerunt super Murum*; or according to some other Interpreters, we ought to put *Rami* instead of *Filie*, because the Hebrew word signifies both one and the other. What confirms the Septuagint Translation is, that we read also, *Tseiri*, in the Samaritan Hebrew.

brew Text, as the Septuagint read in their Hebrew Copy. *Augustine* of *Eugubio*, who understood not this way of reading Hebrew affirms, that the Greek Transcribers have added some words here; and besides, that the Septuagint have read very ill, by putting in of other Points; and lastly, that they understood not Hebrew. But this Author does very often wrong to the Septuagint, understanding but very indifferently himself the Hebrew Tongue.

*Gen. 49. 24* In Verse 24. where the Vulgar has it according to the present Hebrew, *Sedit in forti arcus ejus*, the Septuagint have translated, *And their Bows were broken with force*; at least the Greek words of the Septuagint, *Καὶ συντελέσθη μετὰ νεότητος τὰ τόξα αὐτῶν*, are thus translated in the ancient vulgar Latin made from the Septuagint: But if we examine the Greek Verb *συντελέσθη*, as it relates to the Hebrew Text, we may translate, *Commoratus est*, and not *Contritus est*; wherefore we ought to observe, that the Septuagint us'd to stretch the signification of words beyond their ordinary acceptance, and that without understanding the Hebrew Tongue, it is impossible for us to translate them into another Tongue.

*Gen. 49. 26* In Verse 26. where we read in the Vulgar, *Super Benedictionibus patri ejus*, the Septuagint have translated, *Above the Blessings of the sixt Mountains*, by reading *Harè* instead of *Horai*, by changing only the Points; and they have added this word to the following word *Ad*, whereas the *Massoret* has divided them: We read not in the Vulgar, *Horai*, as it is in the present Hebrew, but *Horau*; and for this reason it is translated, *Benedictionibus patrum ejus*, *Ejus* being put instead of *Meorum*, as it is in the Hebrew. To proceed, the Septuagint is very much confus'd in this place, and the modern Translators have given the sence more clearly. I believe likewise, that the last words of this Verse ought not to be took, as they are in the ancient Latin Translation of the Septuagint, *Super Caput fratrum quorum dux fuit*, which agrees with the Hebrew; for as much as the Hebrew word, *Nezir*, signifies not *Nazareen*, but *One separated from his brethren, and exceeds them in good qualities*. This the Latins call, *Egregius*, *Eximius*; *Augustine* of *Eugubio*, who understood not the Septuagint in this place, has very improperly call'd them, *Ignorant persons*.

*Gen. 49. 27* In Verse 27. where we read in the Vulgar according to the present Hebrew, *Mane comedet prædam*, the Septuagint have translated it, *In the morning he shall eat again*, because they read *Od* in their Hebrew Copy, and not *Ad*, as we at present do. There is also in this same Verse an Error of the Transcriber, and instead of *ידעון*, *Give*, as it

is

is in the Roman Edition, or *ידעון*, *Shall give*, as *St. Jerom* has read; it ought to be *ידעון*, *Shall divide*; and this agrees both with the Hebrew and Vulgar.

Lastly, In Verse 28. where we ought to translate according to the Hebrew, *These are the twelve Tribes of Israel*, the Septuagint have translated, *(These are the twelve Sons of Jacob)* which seems to be better sence, because Tribes are not there spoke of, because as yet there were none.

Thus we ought to examine the Septuagint, that we may not unjustly accuse them of Ignorance, as some have done, and especially *Augustine* of *Eugubio*, whom I rather name, because he is usually reckon'd to understand very well both the Greek and Hebrew Tongues. It is certain that this Italian Bishop has not done the Septuagint justice, as is easie to prove by several Examples; as when he condemns them for translating in Chap. 19. *Gen.* Verse 3. *Place* instead of *Banquet*: But he observes not that in the Edition of *Venice*, which he made use of, there is a plain Error of the Transcriber, or rather of the Printer, and that we ought not to read, *τῆρον*, *Place*, as it is in this Edition, but *πῶρον*, *Banquet*, as we read in the other Editions, according to the original Hebrew.

The same *Augustine* makes himself again ridiculous, when he condemns the Septuagint Translation of the Chap. 25. *Gen.* Verse 18. where the Hebrew Verb *Naphal*, is translated *Dwelt*, although the Verb usually signifies to *Fall*. He defends the Vulgar Translation, which has it *Obiit*; whence he takes occasion to blame the Greek Interpreters, and to say, that it was necessary for *St. Jerom* to make a new Translation of the Bible. But if he had endeavour'd to find out the sence of this place, according to the true Rules of Grammar, he would have acknowledg'd the Septuagint Translation to have been very exact, and that it ought not to be translated otherwise. The death of *Ishmael* is not there spoke of, but the Land wherein he dwelt, as appears by the foregoing words. Those who understand the Scripture style, know that the Verb *Fell*, is the same with, *His Lot or Share fell*, which signifies, *He dwelt, or inhabited*, as it is in the Septuagint Translation, as likewise in *Suadius's* Chaldean, Syriack and Arabick Translations. This is moreover evident in the Chap. 16. *Gen.* Verse 12. where the same word is, which cannot be translated any other ways. We ought therefore to take care of correcting so easily the Septuagint Translation by the Vulgar, because there are many places, where these Translators have done better than *St. Jerome*

Hieron.

from and the modern Interpreters. Their Translation was for several Centuries as authentick in the Church as the Vulgar is at present; but we ought not for all that to believe with *Vossius*, that it was inspir'd by God. For it is certain, that it has its faults as well as all other Translations of the Scripture: And that we may judge better herein, I shall give some fresh Examples of this Translation taken out of the Book of *Psalms*.

## C H A P. VII.

*Examination of the Septuagint Translation of the 22. Psalm. This Translation compar'd with the present Hebrew, and the Translation of St. Jerom; whence we may judge, as also by the preceding Chapters, how uncertain the Hebrew Text of the Bible is.*

**T**He *Psalms* which we use at present in the Church, are those which were heretofore sung, and were in the ancient Vulgar, before St. *Jerom's* new Translation was publickly receiv'd. As the people were us'd to these *Psalms*, they have constantly been preserv'd, and the new Translation which St. *Jerom* made of the *Psalms*, as well as of the rest of the Scripture, were never thoroughly receiv'd in the Church. Wherefore we may call the Latin Translation of the *Psalms* the Septuagint Translation, although it agrees not exactly with the Greek, and there are some little alterations. We shall here examine this Greek Translation upon the 22. *Psalm* by the Hebrew Text, and the new one of St. *Jerom*, printed at the end of his Book.

First, The Septuagint seem to have read in the Text of this *Psalm*, *Ezerat*, instead of *Aieleb*, as it is in the present Hebrew Copy; St. *Jerom* read *Aieleb*, and translated *Ecruus*, wherein he agrees with the modern Translators who have translated it a *Stag*. The Septuagint have translated it, *ἀντίληψις*, *Defence* or *Succour*, as if it was *Ezerat*; however after a serious examination of the thing, I am of opinion that here is no various Reading, and that these Interpreters have translated the Hebrew word *Aialeb*, *Defence* or *Succour*, as they have translated *Eialut*, *βοήθειαν*, *Succour*, in the 20th. Verse of the same *Psalm*. I would not then multiply here the various Readings, as

*Grotius*

*Grotius* and some others have done, because there is no necessity for it. As for the sence, the Septuagint Translation seems to be more intelligible than St. *Jerom's*. We ought not however in this case to rely upon the plainest sence, because most of the Titles of the *Psalms* are obscure, and almost unintelligible to the *Jews* as well as *Christians*.

Secondly, These words of the first Verse, *Respice in me*, or as it is in the Greek, *ἐπίθεε*, are superfluous, and some ancient Fathers have observ'd that they were not in the Hebrew. The reason is, because the Septuagint have twice translated the same word, which nevertheless is differently read, because it is twice repeated. *Eli*, which signifies *Deus meus*, signifies also *ad me*, if we read it *Elai*. Wherefore we ought to take care how we read the Septuagint Translation, where the same word is sometimes twice translated.

At the end of this Verse, where we read in the Septuagint, *τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου*, *Delictorum meorum*, the modern Interpreters translate according to the present Hebrew, and St. *Jerom*, *Rugitus mei*. This variety of Translation is usually ascrib'd to the transposition of the Letter *Aleph* in the Hebrew; but it may be, according to the Rules of the *Mafforet*, which we have before spoke of, the Septuagint look'd upon this Letter *Aleph* but as an insignificant Vowel. *Aleph* heretofore before the invention of Points serving instead of a Vowel, it was hard to distinguish when it belong'd really to the word, or when it was barely a Vowel. We have many of these Examples in the Scripture, and the *Rabbins* themselves agree not how these two sort of words are to be interpreted, although the *Mafforet* has limited the Reading. Thus in Chap. 7. *Jeremiah*, Verse 8. they doubt, whether the Hebrew word *Melecheth*, which is writ without an *Aleph*, ought to be translated *Queen* or *Work*, although the *Aleph* is not mark'd. Many are of opinion that we ought to supply this defect, as if it had been suppress'd by Transcribers. The same Rule will hold good for the Hebrew word in this Verse 1. *Psalm* 22. and then the manner of translating will be very uncertain; so that we must often observe the sence more, than how the word is writ in the Hebrew Text.

In Verse 2<sup>d</sup>. where we read in the Septuagint, *ὄχι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μου*, *Non ad Insipientiam*, St. *Jerom* and the modern Interpreters translate according to the present Hebrew, *Non silentium mihi*, which is clearer and more intelligible than the Septuagint Translation, which in this place is obscure, and comes not nigh the Grammatical sence. It is probable that by these words, *Non ad Insipientiam mihi*, they understand,

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stand,

stand, *That his cries shall not turn to his confusion, but that he shall be heard.* But this sence seems forc'd, whereas the other is natural, and according to the Letter, and consequently ought to be preferr'd before that of the Septuagint.

Pfal. 22. 3. In Verse 3. where the Septuagint has it, *Σὺ δὲ ἐν ἁγίῳ κατοικῆς ὁ ἕκπαιον τῆ Ἰσραήλ. Tu autem in Sancto habitas laus Israel.* The modern Interpreters agree not about the sence of these words, which are very short in the Hebrew. St. Jerom has translated, *Et tu Sancte habitator laus Israel,* which is literally enough express'd from the Hebrew. But the Septuagint expresses the sence better; it is word for word in the Hebrew Text, *And thou art Holy dwelling the praises of Israel,* that is to say, *Thou dwellest in the Sanctuary where the Israelites praise thee.*

Pfal. 22. 8. The Septuagint in Verse 8. have very well translated the Hebrew word *Gol,* which signifies to *Rowl,* by *ἠλπεν, Speravit,* which St. Jerom has yet better express'd by *Confugit.* Nevertheless the modern Interpreters agree not in their opinions, and are at variance about what Tense the Hebrew Verb is in.

Pfal. 22. 16 In Verse 16. where the Septuagint have translated, *ᾤρηξαν χεῖ ἐγὼ μὲ, Foderunt manus meas.* If we follow exactly the present Hebrew, we ought with the *Rabbins* to translate, *Sicut leo manus meae.* St. Jerom and the other Interpreters who were before him, agree in this place with the Septuagint, in so much as this place is usually quoted to show, how the *Jews* have falsified their Hebrew Copies, and perverted the sence of the Prophecies which favour the Christian Religion. I dare however be bold to say, that if we consider the Rules I have set down in the first Book of this Work, in speaking of the *Massoret,* concerning the nature of the Hebrew Tongue as well as the *Massoret,* we may give Reasons for these various Translations without condemning of the *Jews.*

We ought first to suppose, that the Points which at present serve for Vowels in the Hebrew Text, are not so old as the Septuagint Translation, and consequently they might read the word *Caari,* which makes all the difficulty, with other Points than we at present do. It is true, that the *Jews* have put under this word Points which have alter'd the sence of the Prophecie; but perhaps the *Massorets* did it without any premeditated design. They have pointed all the Letters of this word according to their Rules of Art; and as they doubted whether the Letter *Aleph* which is in the word *Caari,* was essential or no, they at last resolv'd to make it essential, and so of one word they

they made two. This binds not other Interpreters, who may look upon this *Aleph* as a Letter which serv'd heretofore only instead of a Vowel. We have many of these Examples in the Books of the *Grammarians Rabbins;* and besides, as we have already shown, the greatest business of the first *Jewish* Grammarians, was to distinguish when these Letters were essential, and when they were only added and simple Vowels. The Septuagint thought the Letter *Aleph* in the word *Leaari* was not essential, and consequently a Vowel; which agrees with the Rule of the great *Massoret,* which takes notice of a great many words where the Letter *Aleph* is writ in the midst of them, although it ought not to be read. It is true, that *Caari* is not one of these words; but although we may follow the *Massoret* Rules in general, we are not oblig'd wholly to rely upon every particular Example of the *Massoret,* every one having the liberty of applying them as he thinks fit.

Secondly, Instead of *Jod,* in the end of the word *Cari,* we ought to put a *Vau,* and then we should read *Caru,* as the Septuagint and the other ancient Interpreters do. As the Letters *Vau* and *Jod* are very much alike, Transcribers often put them one for another, which the *Massorets* have also took notice of, although the word *Cari* is not amongst the Examples they produce; but it is sufficient for us to apply their general Rules where they ought to be appli'd. In a word, the *Jew* who made the collection of this *Massoret,* observes that he has in those correct Copies read *Caru,* and that in the Margin there was *Keri Caari,* that is to say, *We ought to read Caari.* We ought then to ascribe this to a variation in Reading, which we have many other Examples of in the Bible, which the *Massoret Jews* have not observ'd, because they had not those helps we have, by reason of the ancient Interpreters of the Scripture, which they were unacquainted with.

In Verse 24. where the Septuagint have translated, *ἀπ' ἐμῆ, à Me,* it ought according to the present Hebrew, (which St. Jerom's *Hieron.* Translation agrees with) to be translated *Ab eo,* which proceeds from a variation in Reading, by changing *Vau* into *Jod.* The Septuagint read in their Hebrew Copy, *Mimmenni, à me,* whereas we at present read, *Mimmennu, ab eo.* And this is the Reason why in Verse 26. where the Septuagint have *πνήτες, pauperes,* St. Jerom and some others have translated, *Mites* or *Mansueti,* by reason of the Letters *Vau* and *Jod* being chang'd.

R. Jacob Haiim.

Pfal. 22. 25



In the same Verse 26. where the Septuagint have, *ἐν καρδίαις αὐτῶν*, *Corda eorum*, we ought according to St. *Jerom's* Translation and the present Hebrew, to translate, *Cor vestrum*. The Septuagint's is the better sense, which perhaps they observ'd more exactly than the Grammar, because this alteration of persons is very usual in the Scripture. I am however of opinion, that this Irregularity proceeds from the various Readings; as in Verse 29. where the Septuagint have translated, *ἐν ὄψει αὐτοῦ*, *In conspectu eius*, we ought according to the present Hebrew to translate, *In conspectu tuo*, which is occasion'd by the changing of the Letter *Vau* into *Caph*, because the Septuagint in their Hebrew Copy read, *Lephanaan*, whereas we at present read, *Lephaneka*. The changing of *Vau* into *Caph* is usual in other places of the Scripture, and there are Manuscripts, where these two Letters can hardly be distinguish'd in the end of a line, as we have observ'd in the first Part of this Book. To conclude, St. *Jerom's* Translation in this place agrees with the Septuagint.

Verse 29.

Verse 29.

In Verse 29. where the Septuagint have, *καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μὲν αὐτοῦ ζῆν*, *Et anima mea illi vivet*, we ought to translate according to the present Hebrew, *Animam suam non vivificabit*. St. *Jerom* has translated, *Anima eius non vivet*, which variety of Interpretations comes from the various Readings. First, The Septuagint read *Naphsci*, *My Soul*, whereas we read in the present Copies, *Naphso*, *His Soul*, as St. *Jerom* also read in his time, which comes from the changing of the two Letters *Vau* and *Jod* one for another, which is usual. This same various Reading is also in *Psal.* 24. Verse 4. with a *Keri*, which marks the various Reading in the Margin. The *Massoret* however has not mark'd it; so that the *Jews*, who made and publish'd the collection of the *Massoret* says, that it is strange that this word *Naphsi* was not put in the Great *Massoret*, amongst the words which end with a *Vau*, but are read with a *Jod*. We ought not however to think it strange, since the *Massoret* produces not all the various Readings. If the *Massorets* had read the Hebrew Copies, which the Septuagint and other ancient Translators made use of, they would have set down many more Variations. Secondly, Instead of *αὐτοῦ*, *Illi*, as it is in the Septuagint, St. *Jerom* and the modern Interpreters have translated it *Non*, according to the present Hebrew; but if we understand but never so little the Hebrew Tongue, we may easily find out the reason of this Variation, for as much as the same word which signifies *Non*, signifies also *Illi*. It is true, it ought to be differently writ, to make these two different senses; but the Transcribers not exactly observing

this

*Psal.* 24. 4.

*Jacob*  
*Haiim.*

this difference in writing, have often confounded these two words; so that we ought rather to observe the sense, than how this word is writ. St. *Jerom* has also in his Commentaries upon the Scripture observ'd sometimes this confusion, and the *Massoret* has also made a Catalogue of the places where *Lo*, the word in question, ought to be translated *Non*, and where *Illi*, without taking notice of the manner how it's writ. But as the *Massoret* Catalogues are not infallible, we ought only to follow its Rules in general, and apply them according as necessity requires. Thirdly, The Septuagint and St. *Jerom* have translated *Vivet*, whereas according to the present Hebrew we ought to read *Vivificavit*; but this can only be ascrib'd to the various Pointings, which have been added to the Hebrew Text. Heretofore was read *Haia*, whereas we at present read *Hia*.

In Verse 30. of the same *Psal.* 22. where the Septuagint have *καὶ τὸ σπέρμα μὲν*, *Et Semen meum*, we ought according to the present Hebrew to translate simply *Semen*, with which St. *Jerom's* Translation agrees. It is probable that the Septuagint read in their Hebrew Copy, *Zarei*, *My Seed*, whereas we read at present, *Zars*, *Seed*, by leaving out a *Jod*. The *Jewish* Transcribers might take out this *Jod*, because there were two of them in the Hebrew word. The Greek Transcribers might likewise add, *μὲν*, *meum*, to make the sense more clear.

Lastly, In the same Verse 30. where the Septuagint have, *γενεὰ ἐγγύμην*, *Generatio futura*, we ought according to the present Hebrew put a Point after *Generatio*, and translate as St. *Jerom* has, *In Generationes veniet*. But as the Accents which serve at present for Points and Comma's in the Hebrew, were not then invented, we ought not to wonder that they sometimes differ. This may be understood as well of St. *Jerom* as of the *Jews*, who invented after him these sort of Accents. The Septuagint might then translate this place, *Generatio ventura*, by understanding the Pronoun *Ascer*, which signifies *Que*, as if it had been, *Generatio quæ veniet*. It is certain, this Pronoun Relative is not always express'd in the Hebrew, and that sometimes it ought to be understood. They might moreover read in their Hebrew Copy, *Jabo veniet*, instead of *Jabou veniet*, which might happen, by reason of another *Vau's* immediately following, because the Transcribers are commonly mistaken when two of the same Letters meet.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Several Rules to justify the Septuagint Translation by.*

THE Criticism we have made of the Septuagint Translation, by examining of it by the Hebrew Text, sufficiently demonstrates, that the Authors of this Translation were not ignorant in the Hebrew Tongue, as some have imagin'd. But on the contrary we find, that when they differ from the sense of the modern Interpreters, they have reason for it; wherefore the modern Translators are mistaken, in consulting only the Hebrew Copies as they are at present. The many prejudices they have for the Grammar and Hebrew Dictionaries, hinder them from judging aright of the Septuagint Translation, and they observe not that the *Rabbins* have in their Books limited the Hebrew Tongue, and that it would be ridiculous to judge of the ancient Interpreters of the Bible by their Rules only; we ought to have a more general Idea of this Tongue, such as we have already laid down in our Criticism upon the Septuagint Translation. I shall add here some Rules which may help to justify their Translation, and to give the Hebrew Text a greater extent than the Grammarians usually do.

One of the best Rules to justify the Septuagint by is, To have a perfect knowledge of the nature of the Letters call'd *Evi*, that is to say, *Aleph*, *Van*, and *Jod*: These Letters heretofore serv'd instead of Vowels in the Hebrew, as well as in the Chaldean, Arabick, and Syrian Tongues; Points being afterwards added to the Hebrew Text, to serve instead of these ancient Vowels, caus'd a great deal of confusion, because some of these ancient Letters *Evi* have been left out, without considering whether they were part of the words, or barely Vowels.

For Example, The *Aleph* the modern Grammarians confess to be superfluous in some words, which they call *Epenthesis*. Thus in the Chap. 1. of the Prophet *Hosea*, Verse 14. we read *Kam* with a superfluous *Aleph*. But as this is not always evident, we do not sufficiently consider the places where this happens; which causes us to translate the Hebrew as it is writ, without taking notice that the Hebrew Text has

has been alter'd; and we ought chiefly to ascribe to this uncertainty, the difference betwixt the Septuagint Translation and the modern ones, although they have all been made from the same Original.

According to this method of observing the Hebrew Text, as it is at present only in the *Mafforet* Copies, we may translate the word *Lacen* in Chap. 4. Gen. Verse 15. *Wherefore*. But as in the time of the Gen. 4. 15. Septuagint, there was an *Aleph* instead of the Vowel or Point *Comes*, which is at present joyn'd to this Hebrew word, and they read *Lo-cen*, they had reason to translate, *It is not thus*. The *Mafforet* however has not took notice of this word, because the Hebrew Copies of that time were all the same in this place. On the contrary, in Chap. 30. Gen. 30. 11. Gen. Verse 11. where we read *Bagad*, as if it was one word, the *Mafforet* observes, that we ought to read *Ba gad* with an *Aleph* after the *Beth*, and make two words, as the Septuagint have of *Lo cen*. It likewise observes a great many such words in the Scripture which are joyn'd, which ought to be separated, to be rightly understood. We ought then to observe the sense rather than the *Mafforet's* Observation, which can give no certain Rule.

We read in Chap. 7. *Daniel*, Verse 6. *Batar* with an *Aleph*, but Dan. 7. 6. the Septuagint and modern Interpreters translate this word as if there was no *Aleph*, because it is superfluous. But there are several other places, where it is hard to judge whether this Letter is really essential to the word, or whether it has been added. Wherefore the Septuagint often differs from other Translations, and the *Rabbins* themselves sometimes disagree in this point; as in the first Book of *Samuel* 1 Sam. 15. Chap. 15. Verse 5. where we read in the present Hebrew, *Jareu*, 5. with the Point *Cometz* under the *Jod*, the Septuagint have translated, *ἐνδραρυον*, *Laid Ambushes*, as if there was an *Aleph* after the *Jod*. *R. D. Kimbi*, and *R. Aben Melech*, confirm this Translation, but *Raschi* and *R. Levi* are of another opinion.

The Grammarians have likewise invented a Rule concerning the superfluous *Jod*, which they call *Paragogique*, and which the *Mafforet* has likewise look'd upon as superfluous. They have not however thoroughly understood the use of this Rule, which is very proper for the justifying of the Septuagint in many places, and other ancient Interpreters, when they differ from the modern ones.

We may then observe, that before the invention of Points, the Letter *Jod* serv'd instead of the Vowels *J* and *E*, and consequently of the Points which we call *Hiric*, *Tzeve*, *Segol*, and of *Scheva* also. To know this, we may only look upon the different Editions of the *Chaldean*

Buxtorf.

dean Paraphrases, where the Letters *Vau* and *Jod* were heretofore instead of Vowels, as well as in the Hebrew Text. When these Paraphrases were read without Points, there were many *Vaus* and *Jods* put in, some of which remain'd after the invention of Points. *Buxtorf* took away a great many, which yet are in the Edition of *Venice*. I have read some Manuscript Copies of the *Chaldean* Paraphrase of *Onkelos*, where there were more of these Letters instead of Vowels, than in the Edition of *Bask*, corrected by *Buxtorf*. It is the same with the Hebrew Copies of the Bible; and if we had some very ancient Manuscripts, we should without doubt find many of these *Jods* and *Vaus*, which the *Jews* have cut off since the invention of Points. We cannot prove this Alteration better, than by what we have related in the first Book of this Work, in speaking of the Manuscripts we had seen.

Ezek. 16. 19.

To proceed, What we have observ'd of the Letter *Jod*, has been the cause of great difference in Translation, as well in the Genders and Numbers, as in the Persons, and several other things. For example, In Chap. 16, Ezek. Verse 19. we read *Natatti*, which signifies, *I have given*, or *I have put*; but the Points which the *Massoret* has added to the Text as well as the sence, plainly shows this *Jod* to be superfluous, and that it is instead of a *Scheva* or little *E* in the Hebrew, and consequently it ought to be translated, *Thou hast given*, or *put*, for all what is writ in the Text. Which however is not so clear in many places as in the second Book of *Kings*, Chap. 9. Verse 32. where we read in the present Text, *Mi itti, Quis mecum?* The Septuagint have read without a *Jod*, *Mi att*, and put other Points; wherefore they have translated, *τις ει σὺ, Quis es tu?*

2 Kings 9. 32.

Psal. 110. 4. Grotius.

To this Rule we may refer the different ways of the Interpreters translating Verse 4. *Psal. 110*. The Septuagint have translated it, *Thou art a Priest after the order of Melchisedeck*; but *Grotius* affirms, that according to the present Hebrew Text, instead of these words, *Secundum ordinem Melchisedeck*, we ought to translate, *Secundum constitutionem meam ò rex mi juste*. In which he is mistaken as well as some other modern Interpreters, who have not seriously consider'd the Rules we have just now spoke of. There is nothing better than the Septuagint Translation of this place, and it is approv'd of by the most learned *Rabbins*, who have not refus'd to follow exactly the Letter of the *Massoret* Text. It is true that in the Hebrew it is, *Diverati*, which signifies, *Constitutio mea*; but *Grotius* ought to have observ'd, that the *Jod* in the end of the word which signifies *mea*, is often superfluous.

I

I pass by many Examples of this nature, for fear of being tedious.

The Rules which we have given concerning the *Aleph* and the *Jod*, hold also good in the Letter *Vau*, which was one of the ancient Vowels in the Hebrew Tongue. The Translators of the Scripture are often at variance, because they understand not when this Letter *Vau* is essential to the word, or when barely a Vowel. Thus in Chap. 7. Ezek. Verse 11. where the Vulgar has it translated, *Requies in eis*, the Septuagint, or rather *Theodotion* have translated, *Pulchritudo in eis*, and some modern Interpreters translate, *Lamentum in eis*. All this variety of Interpretation proceeds from the Translators not rightly understanding, whether the Hebrew word *Naba* is to be read with a *Vau*, as an essential Letter, or with the Vowel *O* without this *Vau*. *Theodotion* read a *Vau* in his Hebrew Copy, and although there is none at present, the *Rabbins*, *Juda* and *Jona*, agree not with *Theodotion* in this point. *Aben Melech* has observ'd in his Grammatical Commentary upon this place, that these two *Rabbins* make this Noun to come from *Naba*, which signifies *An Habitation*. But *R. D. Kimbi*, who has follow'd more exactly the *Massoret*, makes it come from *Naba*, which is the reason why several modern Interpreters have translated it, *Lamentum*. As for *Theodotion*, who has translated, *Pulchritudo*, and not *Habitaculum*, the reason is, because the Hebrew word signifies both one and the other, because the two Roots, *Nava* with a *Vau*, and *Naz* with an *Aleph*, are often taken one for another. We ought however to observe, that *St. Jerom* who has translated *Requies*, has read the Hebrew word with a *Heth* instead of a *He*, which is in the present Hebrew Text.

Ezek. 7. 11

Rabbins, Juda and Jona, Aben Melech in Miclol. Jophi. R.D. Kimbi

Hieron.

We are to observe, that we have quoted in this place the Septuagint Translation, as it is cited by *St. Jerom* in his Commentary upon this Prophet, and not as it is in the Greek Copy of the *Vatican*, where there are some things left out, if we compare it with the Hebrew Text. Wherefore I us'd before these terms, the (Septuagint, or rather *Theodotion*, to show, that the Latin or ancient vulgar Translation, which *St. Jerom* has inserted in his Commentaries upon the Prophets, is not the pure and true Edition of the Septuagint; since *St. Jerom*, who has quoted it under the name of the Septuagint, has observ'd, that the passage here in question is difficult, and that the Septuagint differs from the Hebrew, to which something taken from the *Theodotion* Translation has been added, to supply the defect, and to compleat the sence, which seems to be imperfect in the Septuagint.)

H

Locus

Hieron  
Com. in  
Ezek. c. 7.

*Locus difficilis, & inter Hebraicum & Septuaginta multum discrepans, quibus pleraque de Theodotionis Editione addita sunt, ut aliquam habere consistentiam viderentur.* Wherefore we ought not wholly to be guided by the ancient Vulgar Edition, which St. Jerom has joyn'd with his Commentaries upon the Prophets, and some other Books of the Scripture, if we will restore the true and first Septuagint Translation, which has been alter'd by these two Fathers, under pretence of making it agree better with the Hebrew. We therefore plainly see by Chap. 7. Ezek. that the Greek Copy at Rome is correct enough, although it is not wholly free from all alteration.

There is therefore no Greek Copy of the Septuagint but what has its faults, and had considerable ones before Origen and St. Jerom's time; and perhaps it would be well that those two Fathers had not took so much liberty in reforming of the ancient Copies of the Septuagint, or at least that they had not inserted so many Additions; it would have been more proper to have mark'd the faults in the Margin. To conclude, We ought not to be so much prepossess'd with the Antiquity of this Translation, as to prefer it in all points before the new Translations. That we may judge without prejudice, we ought to follow the Rules I have before set down, whence we may see, that we ought not wholly to rely upon the present Hebrew Text, nor upon Authors, who have not seriously enough examin'd the Septuagint Translation. I excuse not St. Jerom, who does not the Septuagint the justice he ought to do, as I shall prove in the series of this Discourse.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IX.

*Of other Greek Translations of the Bible, which we have only some fragments of, and chiefly of that which the Samaritans use.*

IT is certain, that there were heretofore several Greek Translations of the Bible, which we have only some fragments of. Origen took the pains of collecting of them all, or at least all he could find, and putting of them in his *Hexaplasses*, except the Greek Translation of the *Pentateuch*, made by the *Samaritans* for their particular use. We have already observ'd and spoke of this Translation, which the Fathers often mention. *Vossius*, who in this is particular, has affirm'd, *Voss.* that there never was any entire Greek Translation of the *Pentateuch*, which could be call'd a Greek *Samaritan* Translation: He believes, that all the Citations of the Fathers, under the title of the Greek *Samaritan* Copy, were taken from the *Hexaplasses* of Origen, who had according to him the various *Samaritan* Readings and Interpretations in the margin of his *Hexaplasses*. But besides that *Vossius* brings no proof for so extraordinary an opinion, there is no body who reads the passages of the Fathers, where they mention the *Samaritan* Readings, but will conclude, that there really was a Greek Translation of the *Pentateuch*, for the *Samaritans* particular use. Besides, the words of *Eusebius*, which *Vossius* relies upon to confirm his opinion, have clear another sense than what *Vossius* takes them to have.

I deny not but Origen made *Scholia's* in the margin of his *Hexaplasses*; but we ought not for all that to infer, that what the Fathers have said concerning the *Samaritan* Copy, was taken from his *Scholia's*, and not from a true Greek Translation us'd by the *Samaritans*, who were scatter'd up and down in all the Provinces where Greek was spoke. As then the Greek Tongue was us'd in most of the places where the *Samaritans* dwelt, it is probable that they made for their own particular use a Translation of the *Pentateuch*, into the Tongue they then spoke in their Synagogues; imitating in this the *Hellenist Jews*, who then us'd the Greek Septuagint Translation. *Mafius* has observ'd, that *Symmachus*, who had been of the *Samaritan* Sect, *Mafius in Job. Symm. made*

made a new Translation of the Bible into Greek, by reason of the hatred he had for those of his Sect, after he had turn'd *Ebionite*. He moreover adds, That the *Samaritans* who spoke Greek, us'd in that time the Septuagint Translation; but it is more probable that they made a new Greek Translation of the *Pentateuch*, from the *Samaritan Hebrew Text*, imitating in this the *Hellenist Jews*, who had made a Greek Translation of the same *Pentateuch*, from the Hebrew *Jewish Text*. This is the *Samaritan Translation* so often quoted by the Fathers, which *Eusebius* mentions in the beginning of his Chronicle, where he reckons according to the *Samaritan Hebrew Copy* the years the first Patriarchs lived. Father *Morin* seems not to have seriously enough consider'd this matter, when he says, that the Fathers were Authors of this Greek *Samaritan Translation*; they only made use of this as of all others, which they are no more the Authors of, than of this. Besides, he who made this collection of *Scholiaz's*, which is joyn'd with the Greek Edition of *Francfort*, has very ill confounded this Greek *Samaritan Translation*, with the *Targum* or *Chaldean Paraphrase* of *Jerusalem*.

The little which remains of this Greek *Samaritan Translation*, will not suffer us to speak much hereon: We may however judge by what we have, that it was according to the Letter, although the Author does not always endeavour to translate the words of his Text, according to the utmost rigor of the Letter; which we ought to take notice of, for fear of multiplying of the various Readings of the Hebrew Text, as some have done by relying upon this Translation. Sometimes the Greek Translation of the *Samaritans* happens to agree with the *Samaritan Translation*, more than with the *Samaritan Hebrew Text*; which would make one believe it was made from this *Samaritan Translation*; but as these two Translations agree not in many places, we cannot affirm that one was made from the other, but only that sometimes the sense is the same in both. As they both were made by *Samaritan Authors* from the same Text, it is not strange that the sense of the Text is sometimes express'd after the same manner.

Thus in Chap. 49. *Gen.* Verse 23. where we read in the Vulgar, *Habentes Jacula*, as it is in both the *Jewish* and *Samaritan Hebrew*, as also in the Septuagint, the Greek Translation of the *Samaritans* has it, *Καύροι μείδων*, and this agrees with the *Samaritan Translation*, where it is according to the same sense, *Authors of Division*; *Onkelos* has also thus translated it in his Paraphrase. This Translation however seems to be far from the Grammatical sense, whereas the Septuagint's,

Fa. Morin  
in Exercit.  
Pent. Sa-  
marit.

Gen. 49. 23

Onkelos.

agint's, which most of the *Rabbins* follow, is better, and more exact.

In Verse 24. of the same Chapter, where both the *Jewish* and *Samaritan Hebrew* have *Beetan*, which is usually translated, *In forti*, in the Vulgar, or *Cum fortitudine*, in the Septuagint, the Authors of these two *Samaritan Translations* have translated, *In the Depth*, which agrees not with the Grammar; but it is probable that this was the receiv'd sense amongst the *Samaritans*, and that for this reason it was put into their two Translations.

In Chap. 5. Verse 19. we read in the *Samaritan Translation*, according to both the *Jewish* and *Samaritan Hebrew Text*, *In the place of God*; but the Author of the Greek *Samaritan Translation* has it, *I fear God*; whence many have infer'd, that in that time they read otherwise in the Hebrew *Jewish Text*. However we ought not in this place to make a various Reading, since the *Samaritan Translator* has follow'd the sense, without scrupulously keeping close to the words of his Text. We find *Sadus Gaon*, who read in his Hebrew Copy, as we at present do, has translated after this manner in his *Arabian Paraphrase*.

In Chap. 8. *Exod.* Verse 22. where it is in the Vulgar, *Omne genus Muscarum*, the Greek *Samaritan Interpreter* has translated *Raven*, because he read in his Hebrew Copy, *Oreb*, instead of *Ereb*, by changing of the Points, which is a plain Error of the Translator.

Lastly, There are several places where the Greek Translation of the *Samaritans* agrees with the Septuagint; so that the *Samaritan Translator* seems to have consulted it in his Translation.

The second Greek Translation which we have only some remainders of, is that of *Aquila*, who liv'd under the Emperour *Adrian*. This Interpreter forsook the Christian Religion, and embrac'd *Judaism*, and applying himself to the study of the Hebrew Tongue, he undertook the making of a new Translation of the whole Scripture, to oppose the Septuagint with, which the *Christians* then made use of against the *Jews*. But not being satisfi'd with this Translation, he afterwards review'd it, and made a second, more according to the Letter than the first. Wherefore we sometimes find *Aquila's Translation* of the same place differently quoted. What we have of it sufficiently shows, that this Author chiefly endeavour'd to translate word for word from the Hebrew Text of the Bible, and to make rather a Dictionary of Hebrew words than a Translation. So likewise this Translation is in many places so barbarous, that it is impossible

to



Epiphan.  
St. Jerom.

to understand it; for this reason St. *Epiphanius* contemn'd it, and look'd upon it as an unprofitable work. St. *Jerom* however commends *Aquila* in some places for an exact and faithful Interpreter; but in other places he lays him wholly aside, and calls him ridiculous and impertinent, because he was not satisfi'd with translating of the words; but besides that he gives the Etymology or propriety of them. What made St. *Jerom* speak so variously of *Aquila's* Translation was, that finding himself blam'd for not exactly translating of the holy Scripture, he answers, that this way of literally translating, and according to the strictness of Grammar, ought to be laid aside, and he gives for example the Translation of *Aquila*, whom he condemns for too much exactness.

Origen in  
Ep. ad  
Afric.

The same St. *Jerom* on the other side, when the true and proper signification of the Hebrew words is question'd, commends this Translation as the most excellent, and praises the Author for an exact and faithful Interpreter. *Origen* speaking of *Aquila's* Translation affirms, that the *Jews* prefer'd it before all others; and for this reason they commonly made use of it in their Disputes against the *Christians*. The *Christians* on the other side for the same reasons cry'd it down, and were in a manner oblig'd to look upon it as a false Translation, made by one of the greatest Enemies of the Church. It was impossible for the Fathers to judge aright, because they not understanding the Hebrew Tongue, could not compare it with the original Hebrew. They had however reason to mistrust this Translation, and to believe that *Aquila*, who had so vigorously declar'd himself against the Church, had favour'd as much as he could, the opinions of the *Jews*, especially where the Hebrew words might be differently interpreted. We ought however to do him this justice, that he meddled not with the Hebrew Text, which no one doubted of. When the Fathers accuse the *Jews* who us'd the Translation of *Aquila*, of corrupting the Scriptures, it is to be understood of false interpreting of the Scripture, but not of corrupting the Text it self, which they meddled not with. To conclude, The Fathers who condemn'd this Translation, have sometimes made use of it; and St. *Epiphanius*, who look'd upon it as a barbarous and impertinent Work, makes use of it in one place very aptly to oppose the Septuagint, which there seem'd to favour the *Arian* Heretic. Besides, if we had at present both *Aquila's* Translations, they would help us both in the understanding of the Hebrew Tongue, and in the clearing of the Hebrew Text. They were profitable to St. *Jerom*, in that he us'd them for a Dictionary, to under-

derstand the literal signification of the Hebrew words. Wherefore he could not forbear praising of *Aquila* in several places of his Works, and defending of him from those who aspers'd him. *Aquila* (says he) *qui non contentiosius ut quidam putant, sed studiosius verbum interpretatur ad verbum*. We cannot however excuse this Interpreter of affectation, which St. *Jerom* calls, *κακοζηλια* or a ridiculous zeal, in that he translated every word of his Text according to the Letter, and with such strictness, that it made his Translation altogether barbarous. I thought it would not be wholly in vain to take notice of the places, where *Aquila* and some other ancient Greek Interpreters seem to have read the Hebrew, otherwise than we at present do. *Ludovicus Capellus* having in his Criticism observ'd most of them, has sufficiently clear'd this point; and besides we may hereupon consult *Drusius's* Collection of the fragments of these ancient Greek Translators.

Hieron in  
Ep. 125. ad  
Damas.

The third Greek Translation according to some is *Theodotion's*, or as others say, *Symmachus's*, it not being wholly agreed upon, which of these two Authors liv'd first. *Symmachus* was first of the *Samaritan* *Symmach* Sect, which he afterwards quitted, and became a *Nazarean* or *Ebionite Christian*. It is usually thought that he made his new Translation under the Emperour *Severus*, and that he made it by reason of the hatred he bore the *Samaritans*. He did not (as *Aquila* did) translate word for word from the original Hebrew; but as St. *Jerom* observes, he studied the sense of the Scripture, which he appli'd himself more to, than to the Grammar. He afterwards review'd his Translation as well as *Aquila*, and publish'd, as he had done before him, a new Edition, as St. *Jerom* affirms.

We shall reckon the *Theodotion* as the fourth Greek Translation, although some affirm that he liv'd before *Symmachus*, under the Emperour *Commodus*. He was at first of the Sect of the *Marcionites*, from whence he turn'd and became *Ebionite*. He endeavour'd to translate the Scripture according to the sense, rather than according to the words of the Text, wherein he differs much from *Aquila*, and comes nigh the Septuagint, which he endeavour'd to imitate. For this reason *Origen* prefer'd this Translation before all others, and thought he ought to take out of the *Theodotion*, for to add to the Septuagint. St. *Jerom* affirms, that in his time the Prophecie of *Daniel* translated by *Theodotion*, was read in the Church: I shall only quote one passage, whence we may easily know what method he follow'd in translating of the Scripture. In Chap. 4. *Gen*. Verse 4. where we read in the Septuagint, *ἐπίδω*, and in the Vulgar, according to the same sense, *respexit*.

Gen. 4. 4.

*respexit.* Theodotion has translated, *ἐνεπνεύσεν, Inflammavit*: Which agrees with the Exposition of several *Rabbins* upon this place, who affirm, that *Cain* perceiv'd that his Sacrifice was not agreeable to God, because it was not burnt. And thus *Theodotion* instead of translating, that *God respected Abel and accepted of his Sacrifice*, has translated as he thought was best, that *God burnt this Sacrifice*. But this manner of translating of the Scripture is liable to Errors, because we may mistake, in deviating too far from the literal sense, and putting in of another sense which we imagine to be better.

Lastly, There are two other Greek Translations which *Origen* places in two Columns in his *Hexaplastes*, whose Authors we are ignorant of. It is however hardly probable they were made by *Catholics*, who at that time acknowledg'd no other Scripture but the Greek Septuagint. Besides, there were none but *Jews*, or those who were almost so, who appli'd themselves to the making of new Greek Translations, thereby to lessen the Authority of that which was receiv'd throughout the whole Church. The Fathers however have consulted all those Translations, upon the difficulties they have met with in the Scripture, and if we had them at present, they might be very useful to us, although the Authors of them were either *Jews* or *Apostates*.

CHAP.

## CHAP. X.

*Whether there have been other Greek Translations of the Bible than what has been already observ'd; and whether there have been several Translations under the name of the Septuagint. Whether Origen, Pamphilus, Eusebius, Lucian, Hefychius, and Apollinaris, have made new Translations of the Bible. Several Reflections upon the Hexaplastes of Origen.*

BESIDES the different Greek Translations of the Bible we have spoke of in the preceding Chapters, there are some Authors affirm, that the Greek Septuagint Translation in the *Hexaplastes* of *Origen* was not that which was then call'd *κοινή*, that is to say, *Common*. *St. Jerom* indeed seems to have distinguish'd these two Greek Translations in several places of his Works, and especially in his Epistle to *Junia* and *Fretella*: But if we seriously read this Epistle, we shall find that all the difference betwixt these two Translations was, that *Origen* had corrected as well as he could the common Edition of the Septuagint; and as he put in his *Hexaplastes* the Septuagint Translation as he had corrected it, people began to distinguish betwixt two Editions of the Septuagint. The ancient one kept the name of *κοινή*, or *Common*, which distinguish'd it from that which was in the *Hexaplastes* of *Origen*, which *St. Jerom* often calls the pure and true Septuagint Translation, because *Origen* corrected many Errors of the Greek Copies, which before him were commonly us'd in the Church. There was then no more difference betwixt these two Greek Septuagint Translations, than there is betwixt the Edition of the Vulgar Latin one before its correction, and the same Vulgar since its correction, by the Popes *Sixtus* the V. and *Clement* the VII. unless perhaps *Origen* may have took too much liberty in his correction.

*Origen* then was not the Author of any new Greek Translation, but *Origen* only publish'd a more correct Edition, which he inserted in his *Hexaplastes*; and as afterwards *Pamphilus* and *Eusebius* writ out this same *Pampb.* Edition, which was in the *Tetraplus* and *Hexaplas* of *Origen*, it was *Euseb.* also

also call'd the Edition of *Pamphilus* and *Eusebius*. Some Authors have thought that *Origen* publish'd this Edition by it self, adding little Stars and other Marks, which we have before mention'd in speaking of the *Hexaplas* of *Origen*, wherein they are deceiv'd, because *Origen* insert'd it in his *Hexaplasses*, that those who had not time to consult all the several Greek Editions, which had been joyn'd with the Septuagint Translation, might at once see the varieties of all these Editions. Besides, *Origen* put several *Scholia's* in the margin of his *Hexaplasses*, to serve for illustration of the Septuagint, which was in the middle, with all these different Notes, and by the help of these *Scholia's*, one saw the difference betwixt the new and old Edition; for he had put in the margin the reading of the Septuagint which he reform'd, and mark'd it with the Letter *O* with a Bar a top, which signifies Septuagint. The Editions of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion*, were also mark'd in the margin of his *Hexaplas* after the same manner, by putting of an *A* for *Aquila*, *S* for *Symmachus*, *T* for *Theodotion*. I shall not speak here of other Marks call'd *Lemnisci*, & *Hypolemnisci*, which were also in the *Hexaplasses* of *Origen*, because several Authors who have spoke of them, agree not of their proprieties and use. Besides, that the two principal Notes were the *Star* and little *Comma* we have already spoke of. Thus this new Edition of the Septuagint according to the correction of *Origen* was dispos'd, which was insert'd in the *Hexaplas*, as we have already shown; and this few persons have clearly understood, not imagining how it could be, that in one and the same Work, the Translations of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, *Theodotion*, and the others, should be contain'd both at length, and in Abridgment, and how the ancient Edition of the Septuagint, which was call'd, *Common*, could be joyn'd in the same Work with the new Edition of *Origen*. However, if we consider the different Notes we have already spoke of, and the Signs and *Scholia's* which were in the margin of the *Hexaplasses*, we may easily reconcile all these things. Which we may the easilier understand, by seriously reading of *Eusebius*, *St. Jerom*, *Ruffinus*, and some other Fathers, who have treated of the order or disposition of the *Hexaplas* of *Origen*.

This last Work of *Origen's* was found to be so useful for particular persons, that in a little time it was known in all the Eastern Churches, and the *Syrians* translated it into their Language. As *Eusebius* and *Pamphilus* had made an exact Copy from the Original of *Origen*, this Copy was much sought after, and we yet find in some Libraries ancient Greek Copies of the Bible, under the Name of these two great

great men, which the Greek Transcribers commonly put before their Books, to give them the greater Authority. We may besides observē, that those who succeeded *Origen*, were not contented with the *Scholia's* he had put in the margin of his *Hexaplas*, but they added others of the same nature, which they thought were useful for the clearing of the Bible Text. Nevertheless in all the search I have made, I have not found that *Origen* put the various Readings of the *Samaritan Pentateuch* in the margin of his *Hexaplasses*, as *Vossius* has affirm'd. It is not true that the word *Pipi*, which *Origen* had also mark'd in the margin of his *Hexaplasses*, in all the places where the Noun *Jehova*, which is the Noun Substantive of *God*, was writ, was took from the *Samaritan* Characters, as *Postel* and some other Authors have fanci'd. If we but never so little consider this word *Jehova*; how it is writ in the *Jewish* Hebrew Text, we shall be convinc'd, that *Origen* put in the margin of his Copy the word *Jehova*, in such Hebrew Characters as are in the present Hebrew Copies. But the Greek Transcribers, who understood not the Hebrew Tongue, made only a word with the four Letters which the word *Jehova* is compos'd of in Hebrew; which Letters are exactly like *Pipi*, writ in great Characters, which are usually call'd, *Litera unciales*, if we write them from the left to the right as the *Greeks* do, and not from the right to the left as the *Hebrews* do.

The Emperour *Constantine* plainly speaks of this new Edition of the Bible made by *Origen*, in a Letter which he writ to *Eusebius* upon this Subject, where he recommends to him the care of seeing the Books of the Scripture writ by able Transcribers upon good Parchment, for the use and profit of the Church. I doubt not but *Eusebius*, upheld by the Authority of *Constantine*, recommended the Edition of the Bible corrected by *Origen* throughout the whole Empire. In the time of *St. Jerom* and *St. Augustine*, there were hardly any other Copies of the Scripture made use of but those corrected by *Origen*, which were afterwards translated into Latin, Syriack, and other Tongues.

To understand more thoroughly this new Edition of *Origen's*, which was also call'd *Eusebius's* and *Pamphilus's*, we are to observe, that *Ruffinus* blam'd *St. Jerom* for having been the first who durst alter the Scripture receiv'd by the Church; and he affirms, that *Origen* had put nothing of his own in his *Hexaplasses*, whereas *St. Jerom* had made Additions of his own translating from the Hebrew Text; but besides that it would be easie to prove, that *Origen* had chang'd some

Words of the ancient Greek Edition of the Septuagint, to make it agree better with the original Hebrew, this imputation of *Ruffinus* is very ridiculous. The Question is, concerning the Septuagint translated into Latin, which the Western Church made use of, to which *St. Jerom* added, following the example of *Origen*, what he thought was wanting in the Septuagint, and translated these Additions immediately from the Hebrew, which he also mark'd with a Star, as *Origen* had done. All the difference betwixt *St. Jerom* and *Origen* herein was, that *St. Jerom*, who understood Hebrew much better than *Origen*, translated the Hebrew into Latin himself, whereas *Origen* us'd only the *Theodotion* Translation, whence he took what he inserted in his new Edition of the Septuagint. *Ruffinus* then had no reason to call *St. Jerom* an Innovator, who had scandaliz'd the Church with his Novelties, since *Origen*, who he so zealously defends, had done the same thing long before *St. Jerom*.

Hieron.

Aug. lib. 15  
de Civit.  
Del, c. 14.  
Idem lib. 8  
de Civit.  
Del, c. 43.

Hieron.

We need not stay any longer to examine the new Editions of the Septuagint made by *Lucian* and *Hesychius*, since several Criticks have very well already treated upon this Subject. Some Authors will have them to have made a new Translation; but *St. Jerom* affirms in several places of his Works, that they only corrected the ancient Greek Septuagint, which was full of faults. *St. Augustine* is of the same opinion, concerning all these new Editions of this Greek Septuagint; for he affirms, that no body durst correct it by the original Hebrew, even in those places where it seem'd to contradict it self. He acknowledges however, that some Interpreters have thought that the Greek Copies of the Septuagint ought to be corrected by the Hebrew Text, altho' no one ever thought of taking out of the Septuagint what was not in the Hebrew Text. I dare however affirm, that the manner of *Origen*, *Hesychius*, and *Lucians* correcting of the Greek Septuagint, seems to show that they were not satisfi'd with consulting of ancient Greek Copies of the Septuagint, but they consulted also the original Hebrew, and the Greek Translations made from the Hebrew; so that they seem to have taken too much liberty in their Criticisms. *St. Jerom* sometimes calls the Edition of *Lucian* the Vulgar, because it was indeed but the Vulgar corrected, and we may so call all the other Editions we have just now spoke of. As if we should call the Vulgar of *Alcala*, or *Complute*, the vulgar Edition printed with several Corrections in the Bible of *Complute*; or we should call *Stephens* Vulgar, and the Vulgar of the Divines of *Louvain*, the Editions of the Vulgar corrected by these Authors.

Lastly,

Lastly, *Apollinarius*, whom *St. Jerom* affirms he had heard read upon the Scripture at *Laodicea*, went farther than any we have yet mention'd; for he not being satisfi'd with any one Translation of the Bible, made a new one according to his own fancy, taking what he thought fit out of each Translator, and chiefly out of *Symmachus*, whom he preferr'd before all others; but *St. Jerom* found fault with this Work, because there was no uniformity in the Translation, and the Author follow'd rather his own sense and reason, than the propriety of the words of the Text; wherefore his Translation was approv'd of neither by *Jews* nor *Christians*. The *Jews* found fault with it, because it agreed not with the original Hebrew; and the *Christians* on the other side finding it to differ much from the Septuagint, look'd upon it as a Work of a very unskillful person.

Hieron.  
Epist. 55.  
Id. Apoll.  
cont. Ruff.

## CHAP. XI.

*The ancient Translations of the Bible which have been us'd by the Western Church. The vulgar Translation, and who is the Author of it.*

THE holy Scriptures being publish'd chiefly for the Instruction of the faithful, were read in the Assemblies from the beginning of Christianity. Wherefore it was necessary for every Church to have a Translation of them into its own Tongue; and this was partly the reason why the Latin Church which is one of the ancientest, translated the Bible into Latin. As there was at that time no other Scripture acknowledg'd besides the Septuagint Translation, and the Hebrew Text was kept by the *Jews* in their Synagogues, the Latin was translated from the Septuagint, there being no other Original but this Translation. This hinder'd not however those who understood Greek, from reading the Greek Translation it self, and they had the liberty of translating the Greek as they thought good, without relying upon the common Translation us'd by the people. This made *St. Jerom* and *St. Augustine* say, that the Greek Translations of the Bible were to be counted, but that the Latin ones were innumerable.

There

There was always amongst the *Latins* one certain common or vulgar Translation, notwithstanding the many others that were made: Some call'd it *Itala*, others *Vulgata*, and some *Vetus*, or ancient, because this Edition seem'd to be as old as the Latin Church, and the Author was not known. Every one agrees with what we have said concerning this ancient vulgar Translation of the Western Church, wherefore we need stay no longer upon this Point. *Nobilius*, who endeavour'd as much as possible to restore it, caus'd it to be printed at *Rome* in the year 1588. and Father *Morin*, who caus'd it to be reprinted at *Paris* in the year 1688. joyn'd the Greek and Latin of the two Editions of *Rome*. But we cannot boast of having this ancient Translation exact, as it was in the whole Western Church, before *St. Jerom* made his new Translation of the Bible from the Hebrew Text. It was impossible for *Nobilius* to restore it wholly, by the Commentaries and other Books of the ancient Latin Fathers, who have not always follow'd it exactly, taking the liberty to translate anew from the Septuagint the places they quoted, or to prefer other Latin Translations which they thought were better, before the Vulgar. Thus we find no exact uniformity in the passages of this ancient Latin Translation quoted by the Fathers; and it is usual for one Father to quote the same passage differently in different places. And thus we cannot affirm, that the Latin Translation of the Septuagint, carefully collected by *Flaminius Nobilius*, is in all points the same with the ancient vulgar Latin one, us'd throughout the whole Western Church, before *St. Jerom's* new Translation from the Hebrew.

We may however by what we at present have of it, give a very good guess of it, and plainly see, that the Author endeavour'd to translate word for word from the Septuagint, and to imitate even its Barbarisms, so that in many places it is so unintelligible and barbarous, that we can hardly understand it; besides the Interpreter not understanding the Hebrew Tongue, to have recourse to when he met with equivocal terms, has committed many faults which the Fathers could not remedy. *St. Jerom*, who understood Hebrew well enough, to correct these faults, has not done the Septuagint justice, when he blames them for having ill translated the Hebrew; for he sometimes confounds this Latin Translation with the Septuagint, making them the Authors of the Latin Translators faults. We may however observe, that in other places he rights them again, by laying the faults upon the Latin Translator or Transcribers.

This

This ancient Latin Edition, which was heretofore call'd the Common or Vulgar, was not so exact throughout, but that there were many Variations, especially in the Copies dispers'd into several Countreys. As the Greek Transcribers alter'd some things in the Septuagint Copies, so the Latin Transcribers alter'd in many places the Copies of the Latin Translation. Wherefore *St. Jerom* who understood all the three Languages, took upon him to review it carefully, by consulting of the Greek whence it had been made. He indeed corrected many faults in this ancient vulgar Edition, but we may also say, he left a great many, which he could not correct without consulting the original Hebrew; he made use of in his Correction the Greek Copy in the *Hexaplast* of *Origen*, which was thought to be more correct than the vulgar Greek Edition, although it had also many faults, because *Origen* was not able to correct them all, and because the method he took of correcting of them was faulty.

*St. Jerom*, who would give the Latin Church, what *Origen* in his *Hexaplast* had given the Greek, publish'd the ancient Latin Edition corrected, with Additions taken from the Hebrew, which he mark'd with a Star; and he also inserted another mark call'd *Obelus*, to show what he thought was superfluous in the Latin, because it was not in the Hebrew. These are in short the different states of the ancient Latin Edition of the Bible, heretofore call'd the Vulgar, which the Western Church made use of, till *St. Jerom* undertook to make a new Translation from the original Hebrew; from that time this new Translation began to be preferr'd before the ancient Latin one, because it was more clear; and it has since had so much the better of the ancient one, that there is no other read at present in the Latin Church, by whom it is call'd the Vulgar, because it is generally receiv'd throughout the West, as the ancient vulgar one made from the Septuagint was receiv'd before *St. Jerom's* new Translation.

We cannot then doubt but the present Vulgar is the real Translation of *St. Jerom*, excepting some Books which are read in the Church, according to the ancient vulgar Edition, and some inconsiderable alterations which have been introduc'd. None but they who favour the new Translations made from the Hebrew, can deny it to be *St. Jerom's*. It is true it is not wholly his, and in some places the ancient vulgar Edition made from the Greek is mix'd with it; besides, there are several Translations of the same place: But we need not here spend much time in showing, that no one besides *St. Jerom* can be the Author of the present Vulgar. It is certain, that the Translation

now



now commonly call'd the Vulgar, was made from the Hebrew, and there was none of the Ancients except St. *Jerom* could undertake this Work. *Augustine* of *Eugubio* and *Mariana*, who have particularly treated upon this Matter, have prov'd St. *Jerom* to have been the Author of the Translation, which is at present read in the whole Western Church, under the name of the Vulgar. To conclude, I am of opinion, that it is more proper to examine that Translation it self, than too nicely to enquire whether St. *Jerom* is solely the Author of the Vulgar exactly as it is at present. Let us then now see whether St. *Jerom* did well in leaving the Septuagint and ancient Vulgar, to make a new Translation of his own.

St. *Jerom* in one of his Epistles acknowledges, that in his Translation he has follow'd rather the sense than the words, and has shun'd that affectation which he blames in the Translation of *Aquila*, who express'd even the Etymologies and propriety of the Hebrew words. Although this holy Doctor has confin'd himself much more in his Translation of the Bible, than in his other Translations, he follows however the same Rules in that of the Bible, as in his other Translations, as plainly appears in an Epistle of his to St. *Augustine* upon this Matter. He has observ'd them even in the Periods, which when he has found to be too long and intricate, or that there were repetitions, he has made no scruple of abridging of them, and relating simply the sense, without heeding the words in the Hebrew Text. Besides, as he usually imploy'd some Jewish Doctors for the more easie translating of the Scripture, as he himself affirms in his Prefaces to several Books of the Bible, he sometimes puts down the sense which the Jews dictated to him, without keeping too scrupulously to the words of the Text. Which is the reason why the vulgar Translation agrees with the most learned *Rabbins* Commentaries in the most difficult places; and this is also the reason of his deviating sometimes from the Septuagint. To which we may add, that the Hebrew Copy he made use of, differ'd in many places from the Septuagint, and came nigher the present Hebrew Text.

As St. *Jerom*'s Undertaking was a very bold one, and as he was not satisfi'd with the making of a new Translation, but he often corrected the faults of the Septuagint, to give the greater Authority to his new Translation, many oppos'd him, and call'd him an Innovator. St. *Augustine* himself who esteem'd highly the Learning and Piety of St. *Jerom*, could not wholly approve of this new Translation, which seem'd to disturb the peace of the Church; and it went so high,

high, as that St. *Jerom* finding himself on all sides attack'd upon this account, was forc'd to soften his style, and to make Apologies for the authorizing of this Novelty. *Ruffinus* writ more hereupon than any other; and although we ought not to believe him in all things he says against St. *Jerom*, because they were then at difference one with another; the Reasons however he alledges seem to be very convincing, if we examine them without prejudice.

*Ruffinus* blam'd St. *Jerom* rather for the Additions he had inserted in the ancient Translation of the Church, which he had translated from the Hebrew, than that by reason of this new Translation he had scandaliz'd the whole Church, by endeavouring to introduce *Judaism*, and preferring what he had learn'd from a Jew call'd *Barraba*, before what the Church had receiv'd from the Apostles. Would St. *Peter*, (says the same *Ruffinus*) who govern'd the Church several years, have cheated it, by giving it a false Scripture, if he had known that the Jews had been possess'd of the true one? And for as much as St. *Jerom* quotes *Origen* for an Example, as if he only imitated him in giving the Latin what he had given the Greek Church; *Ruffinus* answers, That *Origen* translated not from the Hebrew, and that there were only Jews or Apostates who durst undertake it. Lastly, He shows, that *Origen*'s design in his *Hexaplast*, was clear different from St. *Jerom*'s, whom he accuses of having alter'd the Scripture receiv'd in the Church, which no body had done before him: *Quis enim, says he, alius auderet ab Apostolis tradita Ecclesie instrumenta temerare nisi Judaeus spiritus?* He afterwards blames him for keeping too much company with Jews, and being turn'd such, for condemning in his latter Books what he had writ and approv'd of whilst he was a Christian.

These Exceptions of *Ruffinus* which seem'd to be just, condemn'd as well St. *Jerom*'s new Translation from the Hebrew, as the new Edition he had made from the ancient vulgar Latin one, by changing, adding, and leaving out several things, as *Ruffinus* too passionately blames him for. *Ruffinus* also accus'd him of taking out of the Scripture the History of *Susanna*, and the Song of the three Children in the furnace, which was sung in Churches upon solemn days.

All these Reasons and several others such like which may easily be produc'd, were occasion'd only by the prejudice people had in those times for the Translation of the Septuagint, whom they look'd upon as Prophets. But St. *Jerom* who studi'd the Scriptures more carefully than the other Fathers who went before him, knew that these Inter-

Preterers were so far from being Prophets, that their Translation was faulty in many places; and this made him make a new Translation from the original Hebrew, which he usually calls, *Hebraica veritas*, to distinguish it from all the Translations, which were only uncorrect Copies. It is true, he had done better if he had not deviated so much from the Septuagint; his design was however praise-worthy, and the Western Church has approv'd so well of it, as to prefer his new Translation before the ancient one, which was the only authentick for several Centuries.

St. *Jerom* was of opinion, That the Apostles did not prefer the Septuagint Translation before the Hebrew Text, but that they made use of the most commonly receiv'd Scripture, and most proper for their purpose. The Greek Tongue was then us'd by most Nations where they preach'd the Gospel, and it was spoke in most of the Synagogues, whereas there were but few *Jews* who understood Hebrew. There was therefore no necessity of making a new Translation of the Bible, being there was one already authoriz'd. To answer *Ruffinus* his Objections: St. *Jerom* instead of denying that he had been conversant with the *Jewish* Doctors, to learn the Hebrew Tongue and the Scripture style, counts his having convers'd with them as a great happiness. *Nisi prolixum esset, says he, speaking to Ruffinus, & redoleret gloriolam, jam nunc tibi ostenderem quid utilitatis habeat magistrorum limina terere, & artem ab artificibus discere, & videris quanta sylvæ sit apud Hebræos ambiguum nominum atq; verborum.*

*Hieron in Apol.*

*Clement. Alex. Orig.*

*Mariana pro edit. Vulgat.*

He could find no better Hebrew Masters than the *Jews* of his time, and he shows, that *Clement of Alexandria* and *Origen* had consulted them. What is yet more remarkable in St. *Jerom's* Answer is, That he assures us that the Hebrew Tongue is uncertain, and that the *Jews* agree not about the signification of many words; then he adds, That this uncertainty of the Hebrew has caus'd many words to have been differently interpreted, for as much as every one has translated as they thought was best. Wherefore St. *Jerom* is far from ascribing to himself that Infallibility which some have given him, as if in the making of his Translation he had been inspir'd by God. *Quid juvat, as Mariana in speaking of this opinion very well says, post tot secula novo commento novos Prophetas comminisci?* St. *Jerom* shows in his Works, that he pretended not to make a new Translation of the Bible in quality of Prophet, because he often corrected and review'd his own Translation. His Commentaries differ from his Translation, and he sometimes follows the Septuagint, sometimes *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and

and *Theodotian*. All these Translations plac'd upon different Columns in the *Hexaplast* of *Origen*, serv'd instead of a Dictionary to him; and not being fatish'd with what he could get from these Interpreters, he consulted the *Jewish* Doctors of his time, and generally follow'd what they dictated.

This method is clear different from that of a Prophet, unless we say, that the *Jewish* Doctors upon whom he wholly rely'd, were Prophets. We besides find, that in his Commentaries he very often doubts of the true signification of the Hebrew words, and that he is not uniform throughout in his Translation. Wherefore *Mariana* sticks not to say, that the Council of *Trent* has not declar'd the Vulgar to be infallible, by declaring of it authentick, since it is certain, that St. *Jerom* who was the Author, was no Prophet, and that he might be deceiv'd as well as other Interpreters. A Translation according to *Cardinal Pallavicini* may be authentick, if it has not been designedly corrupted; but that exempts it not from faults: And the same Cardinal adds, That the Translation of any Act is good, when it is faithfully translated, and well enough to decide the affair depending upon that Act; but this hinders not but there may be a better yet made.

*Card. Pala. Hist. l. 6. c. 17.*

The Fathers of the Council of *Trent*, according to the same Cardinal, in authorizing the vulgar Edition, have not wholly laid aside the other Translations, much less the original Hebrew. *Mariana*, who has confirm'd this opinion, and very largely prov'd it, afterwards adds, that St. *Jerom* freely confesses that he has designedly left several faults in his correction of the New Testament, and that the Church has also follow'd his example in its last correction of the Bible. Not but, says this Jesuit, so many learned Doctors of the Church have known these faults, but they thought fit to hide them, seeing there was nothing in this Edition contrary to faith or good manners. He confirms this opinion by the testimony of *Lindanus*, and several other learned both *French*, *Italian*, and *German* Divines, who have not scrupled to correct the faults of the Vulgar. The Critics then may freely examine whether this vulgar Translation is exact, or whether a better than St. *Jerom's* can be made from the Hebrew Text. In this they follow only his example who forsook the Septuagint, and the ancient vulgar one receiv'd by the whole Church, to make a new one. The Septuagint however was no less authentick at that time, than the Vulgar is at present. This Father had reason to think, that he ought not wholly to rely upon the Interpreters

which had gone before him, because they were not infallible, and therefore, as Translators, might err. Wherefore he thought it necessary to consult the Originals; and as we have those same Originals, we ought to value those who have consulted them, without prejudice either for the Septuagint, or any other Translation. St. *Jerom* has pretended to have had in this particular the advantage of the Septuagint, in that he made his Translation since the coming of our Saviour, and consequently he could the better clear those places which before were difficult and obscure. Lastly, He has made the *Jews* of his time, Judges of his new Translation, to answer thereby those who accus'd him of introducing Novelties in the Church. But as we have all necessary Helps whereby to make a true judgment, let us particularly examine some Chapters of this Translation, according to the usual Rules of Criticism.

## CHAP. XII.

*Some Chapters of the Vulgar examin'd, and compar'd with St. Jerom's Remarks in his Hebrew Questions upon Genesis.*

Hieron  
Quæst.  
Heb. in Gen.  
1. 2.

ST. *Jerom* observes, that in Chap. 1. *Gen.* v. 2. instead of *Ferebatur*, the Hebrew word signifies *Inonbabat*, which agrees with the Remarks of some *Rabbins* upon this place, St. *Jerom* however in his new Translation makes use of the word *Ferebatur*, which was in the ancient Vulgar. I believe the Hebrew word is better translated by *Ferebatur* than *Inonbabat*, because this last agrees better with the Syriack than Hebrew.

Gen. 1. 8. In Verse 8. Chap. 1. *Gen.* neither the Vulgar nor Hebrew have these words of the Septuagint, *Vidit Deus quod esset bonum*. It is probable that the *Greeks* have added them in their Translation, because they saw they were in the discourse of the other days Creation; and this has made many Authors believe, that the Hebrew and consequently the Vulgar which was made from the Hebrew, was in this place faulty. But they have not observ'd, that this Clause is a little after in Verse 10. and that it answers to the second days Creation. Wherefore it is unnecessarily repeated in the Septuagint. In

In Chap. 2. Verse 2. *Gen.* where we read in the Septuagint, *Die Gen. 2. 2.* *sexta*, it is in the Vulgar agreeable to the Hebrew Text, *Die septimo*. St. *Jerom* has observ'd this variety of Interpretation, and prefer'd the Hebrew before the Septuagint, although it seems to make a more proper sense than the Hebrew Text.

In Verse 8. of the same Chapter, where it is in the Vulgar, *Plantaverat Gen. 2. 8.* *Paradisum voluptatis à principio*, St. *Jerom* thought it ought to be translated, *Plantaverat Paradisum in Eden à principio*. We ought indeed rather to translate *In Eden*, with the Septuagint and St. *Jerom*, than *Voluptatis*, with the Vulgar. It is also better to translate, *Ad Orientem*, as it is in the ancient Vulgar made from the Septuagint, than *à principio*. St. *Jerom* has very ill defended this last Translation, *à principio*, concluding from thence, that Paradise was created before the Heaven and the Earth. This without doubt he had learnt from the *Cabbalistic Jews* of his time; for according to the Dreams of the *Cabbale*, God created seven things before the World, one of which was Paradise. But let us let these sort of Explanations alone, which are only Quirks and ill grounded Allegories. To conclude, We ought in this place to prefer the ancient vulgar Translation before the present one.

In Verse 17. where we read in the Vulgar according to the Hebrew, *Morte morieris*, St. *Jerom* affirms, that *Symmachus* has better translated it, *Mortalis eris*; he has nevertheless in his Translation set down the former, which is the most literal, and besides is in the ancient Vulgar.

In Chap. 3. Verse 15. where it is in the Vulgar, *Ipsa conteret caput tuum*, St. *Jerom* in his Hebrew Questions has translated, *Ipsa conteret*, as it is also in some Manuscript Copies of the Vulgar, and he observes that the Septuagint have translated it, *Ipsa servabit*. But St. *Jerom* might easily have corrected here an Error of the Greek Transcribers, who occasion'd this Translation, as I have already shown. We read at present in the Vulgar, *Ipsa*, because St. *Augustine* and some ancient Fathers read it so in their Latin Copies; but it is a manifest Error which proceeds from a more ancient one, which was in the common Greek; for instead of *αυτη*, *Ipsum*, they read long since, *αυτος*, *Ipsa*, from whence they afterwards made *Ipsa*. However St. *Jerom* and the ancient Vulgar printed at *Rome* and *Paris* read *Ipsa*; and besides the Doctors of *Louvain* say, they have found *Ipsa* in two Manuscript Copies of the Vulgar. Wherefore we ought to prefer this last Reading before the other in our Vulgar. In

Gen. 3. 17. In Verse 17. of the same Chapter, St. *Jerom* has kept in his new Translation the ancient vulgar Interpretation, *In opere tuo*, whereas he ought according to the present Hebrew, which was the same in his time, to have translated, *Propter te*. St. *Jerom* also affirms, that by these words, *In opere tuo*, we are to understand *Sin*, and not *Labour*, and he farther affirms this to be the sense of the Septuagint; but he seems not to come nigh the true Explanation of the Text. *Theodotion* has also follow'd this last Translation; and we are to observe, that St. *Jerom* has sometimes follow'd this Interpreter, without having thoroughly examin'd him; and this is one reason why the Vulgar often agrees with *Theodotion's* Translation. *Aquila* has in this place translated, *Propter te*, according to the present Hebrew Text, and I am of opinion that this last Translation is to be prefer'd before all others.

Gen. 4. 7. Verse 7. Chap. 4. is very differently translated in the Vulgar and Septuagint. But I have already in examining the Septuagint Translation, given the Reasons of this difference, which ought chiefly to be ascrib'd to the variety of the Hebrew Copies. St. *Jerom* has observ'd, that the Septuagint have translated this place otherwise than it was in his Hebrew Copy, then he gives us his Translation, which bears the same sense as the present Vulgar, although the words may differ. We ought not to expect to find the same words exactly in the Observations of St. *Jerom*, as in the present Vulgar. It is enough if the sense be the same; and besides, there are Reasons why St. *Jerom's* Observations, both in his Questions upon *Genesis*, and in his Commentaries upon the rest of the Scripture, agree not always with the Vulgar, although he writ that too.

Gen. 4. 8. In Verse 8. in the ancient Vulgar these words are, *Egrediamur foras*, which St. *Jerom* has observ'd are not in the Hebrew Text, and he says they are superfluous, although they are in the *Samaritan* Hebrew Copy. However he has them in his Translation, for fear of deviating too much from the ancient Vulgar, or rather they have been kept in without his knowledge, for as much as there are in the present Vulgar many things of the Ancient, which have not been thought fit to be alter'd; wherefore we see in some places two Translations mix'd together.

Gen. 4. 16. In Verse 16. Chap. 4. where the Vulgar has, *Habitavit profugus in terra*, the Septuagint have translated, *Habitavit in terra Naid*. But St. *Jerom* in his Notes confirms the Vulgar, and disallows of the Septuagint Translation. I am indeed of opinion there is no necessity of ma-

making of a new Land call'd *Naid*, because of this place of the Septuagint, although there is mention made in *Eusebius's* Dictionary, of these places translated by St. *Jerom* into Latin.

In the last Verse, where we read in the Vulgar, *Iste cepit invocare nomen Domini*, St. *Jerom* observes, that according to the Hebrew we ought to translate, *Tunc initium fuit invocandi nomen Domini*, and this agrees with the present Hebrew; but part of the ancient Vulgar is yet kept in in the Vulgar at present, which has only corrected what seem'd to be foreign to the sense. We ought not then to think that the present Vulgar agrees wholly with the Hebrew Text of St. *Jerom's* time, who in some places only review'd the ancient Translation from the Hebrew. But in his Hebrew Questions upon *Genesis* he is more exact, because his design in this Work is to agree with the Hebrew Copies, and to follow the *Jewish* Doctors Interpretations as much as he can.

In Chap. 5. *Gen.* the Vulgar agrees in its Chronology with St. *Jerom's* Observations, who follow'd the Hebrew of his time, and not the Septuagint, which St. *Jerom* says is in this place mistaken, and he affirms that it ought to be corrected by the Hebrew Text.

In Chap. 6. Verse 3. where we read in the Vulgar, *Non permanebit spiritus meus*, St. *Jerom* observes that we ought to translate according to the Hebrew, *Non judicabit spiritus meus*; but without deviating from the Hebrew Text, the first Translation, which is that of the ancient Vulgar, is best and most natural, and therefore we had reason to preserve it in our present Vulgar.

In Verse 14. of the same Chap. where it is in the Vulgar, *De lignis levigatis*, St. *Jerom* observes, that according to the Hebrew it ought to be translated, *De lignis bituminatis*, in which he seems to be mistaken, having read *Copher* for *Gopher*. He might perhaps himself change the Letter *Gimel* into *Caph*, to make a better sense, although he read *Gopher* in his Hebrew Copy, as we at present do, and this is usual with the *Rabbins*.

In Verse 16. of the same Chap. where it is in the Vulgar, *Fenestram in arca facies*, St. *Jerom* affirms, that according to the Hebrew it ought to be translated, *Meridianum facies*, and that *Symmachus* has better translated it, *Διαφανής*, *Dilucidum*, meaning by that, a *Window*. Thus St. *Jerom* who in his Translation has observ'd the word *Window*, shows that we ought to observe the clearness of the sense, rather than express the Hebrew word for word; which could not hinder him from making literal and critical Remarks in his Hebrew Questions.

Gen. 7. 11. In Chap. 7. Verse 11. the Vulgar has, *On the seventeenth day*, according to the present Hebrew, whereas we read in the Septuagint, *In the twenty seventh day*.

Gen. 8. 4. In Chap. 8. Verse 4. where it is in the Hebrew, *On the seventeenth day*, we read in the Septuagint and Vulgar, *On the twenty seventh day*; whence we ought not to conclude, that St. *Jerom* read otherwise in his Hebrew Copy than we at present do. But it is more probable, that in this place of the Vulgar, the reading of the ancient Vulgar has been kept, as it has been in some other places.

Gen. 8. 7. In Verse 7. of the same Chap. where we read in the present Vulgar, *Qui egrediebatur & non revertebatur*, I am of opinion we ought not to read the Negative *Non*, which is however in the ancient Vulgar whence it has been taken. This same fault is in the printed Copies of St. *Jerom's* Works, and the Criticks who have caus'd these Works to be printed, have not observ'd that the sence of his words plainly show, that it ought to be translated, *Revertebatur*, without the particle *Non*: For he says in his critical Note upon this place, that it is otherwise in the Hebrew than in the Septuagint Translation, and therefore we ought in his Hebrew Questions to read, *Exiens & revertens*, and not, *Non revertens*. Besides, the Divines of *Louvain* affirm, that they have found six Manuscript Copies of the Vulgar without this particle *Non*. *Mariana* also confesses that it ought not to be in our Vulgar, and he proves it by an ancient Copy, and by the Editions of *Alcala* or *Complute*, and of *Philip* the II. which agree in this with the ancient Copies which *Mariana* calls *Gothick*, which were us'd heretofore in the Churches of *Spain*. Thus the last Edition of the Vulgar is not wholly free from faults, since it has this negative Particle.

Gen. 11. In Chap. 11. *Gen.* the Vulgar differs much in its Chronology from the Septuagint, and it agrees not always with the Hebrew. Which we ought to attribute to Transcribers, rather than to the variety of the Hebrew Copies, because, as we have already shown, Transcribers often mistake in setting down of the Numbers in their Books; and even the ancient Copies of the Vulgar agree not always amongst themselves in this point. Supposing this principle which is true, it had been more proper to have restor'd to the Vulgar in Verse 13. of this Chap. 430 years, as it is in the Hebrew, and some Manuscripts of the Vulgar, than to have left 303 years, as it is at present.

In Chap. 11. Verse 28. where it is in the Vulgar, *In Ur Chaldeorum*, St. *Jerom* has observ'd, that we ought according to the Hebrew to

to translate, *In igne Chaldeorum*; but the sence of the Vulgar is much better, and I doubt not but the Septuagint translated so, but that some ignorant person who understood not this Greek word, has put in *Regio*, instead of *ἄσ*, which was in the Septuagint. To conclude, We may observe that when St. *Jerom* in his Hebrew Questions translated, *In igne*, he alluded to a Fable he had learnt of the *Jews*, who say, that *Abraham* was thrown into the fire, because he would not worship Idols.

In Chap. 13. Verse 14. where we read in the Vulgar, *Peccatores Gen. 13. 14 coram Domino nimis*; St. *Jerom* blames the Septuagint for adding, *In conspectu Dei*, which according to him are superfluous words; but they are in the Hebrew Text, and signifie, *Coram Domino*. It is necessary for us to observe concerning this Criticism of St. *Jerom's*, that this Father has set down some things very improperly in his Hebrew Questions upon *Genesis*, where he has oppos'd the Greek Septuagint, on purpose to set up the Authority of the Hebrew Text, and so likewise his new Translation, from this Text.

In Chap. 14. Verse 1. where it is in the Vulgar, *Rex Ponti*, the Septuagint have better translated it, *Rex Ellasar*, by keeping of the same proper Name with the Hebrew. *Aquila* however has translated, *Rex Ponti*, and *Symmachus*, *Rex Scytharum*; but herein they are not exact.

In Verse 5. of the same Chap. where we read in the Vulgar, *Cum Gen. 14. 5: eis*, according to the Septuagint; St. *Jerom* is of opinion that the Septuagint have falsely read the word *Ham* with an *He*, and this has occasion'd this Translation. He moreover affirms, that we ought to read *Ham* with a *Heth*, and translate *In Ham*; so that *Ham* in this place is to be a proper Name. The present Text however is writ with a *He*, as the Septuagint have read; but by keeping back the Letter *He*, we shall translate better with St. *Jerom*, *In Ham*, than with the Septuagint, *Cum eis*. Our Vulgar in this place has kept the Reading of the ancient one, which is usual, as has been already observ'd.

In Chap. 15. Verse 11. where it is in the Vulgar, *Abigebat eos Gen. 15. 11 Abram*, the Septuagint have translated, *Sedit cum eis Abram*. This variety of Interpretation proceeds from a various Reading in the Hebrew Copies; and we may observe that the Vulgar agrees with the present Hebrew, and St. *Jerom's* Reformation.

In Chap. 15. Verse 15. where we read in the Vulgar according to the Hebrew, *Sepultus*, it is in the ancient Vulgar and Septuagint,



*Nutritus*; but we ought to attribute this old Error to the Transcribers, who read in the Greek, *Τραπέης*, *Nutritus*, instead of *Ταπέης*, *Sepultus*.

Gen. 17. 15. In Chap. 17. Verse 15. where the Name of *Sarai* is spoken of, which was chang'd into *Sara*, the Septuagint relate this alteration, as if *Sara* writ before with a single *r*, had been chang'd into *Sarra* with two *rr*; upon which some of the most ancient Greek Fathers have discov'ed Mysteries, because this Letter *r* in Greek signifies a *Hundred*. But we may plainly see, we ought not to ascribe to the Septuagint so gross an Error, which *St. Jerom* had reason to laugh at in his critical Note upon this place. Those who understand Hebrew may avoid this; therefore we ought to lay the fault upon the Greek Transcribers, although it is very ancient.

Gen. 19. 14. In Chap. 19. Verse 14. where it is in the Vulgar according to the Septuagint Translation, *Ad generos suos*, *St. Jerom* observes it ought to be translated, *Sponsos qui accepturi erant filius ejus*, because *Lot's* Daughters were not yet marri'd. But in our Vulgar we have kept the word *Generos*, as it was in the ancient Vulgar, fitting it however to *St. Jerom's* Explanation, which differs from the Septuagint.

Gen. 21. 9. In Chap. 21. Verse 9. these words of the Vulgar, *Cum Isaac filio suo*, are not in the Hebrew, as *St. Jerom* has observ'd; but they have been taken from the ancient Vulgar, because they make the sense clearer.

Gen. 21. 22. In Verse 22. of the same Chap. *St. Jerom* observes that in the Hebrew there is no mention made of *Abimelech* and *Phicol*, which agrees with the Vulgar; but the Septuagint have added the word, *Chozal*, which is not in the Hebrew, although it is in Chap. 26. and Verse 26. However this Observation of *St. Jerom's* is, we may observe, that the present Hebrew Copies agree with those he made use of; and one may justify this Observation by many Examples.

Gen. 23. 2. In Chap. 23. Verse 2. to these words, *In Civitate Arbée*, the Septuagint have added, *Quæ est in valle*, which according to *St. Jerom*, who has left them out in his Translation, are not in the Hebrew, and the present Hebrew agrees with *St. Jerom's* Hebrew Copy.

Gen. 23. 6. In Verse 6. of the same Chap. where it is, *Princeps Dei*, *St. Jerom* blames the Septuagint for translating *Rex*, whereas the Hebrew word signifies *Princeps*, and the Vulgar agrees with *St. Jerom's* Reformation.

In

In Chap. 24. Verse 59. where we read in the Vulgar, *Dimiserunt ergo eam & nutricem illius*, *St. Jerom* observes that it was in the Hebrew Text, *Et dimiserunt Rebeccam sororem suam & nutricem ejus*. But the Septuagint have translated, *substantiam*, instead of *nutricem*; and the Vulgar has it according to *St. Jerom's* sense, only the words are abridg'd, according to the usual custom of *St. Jerom*.

In Verse 63. of the same Chap. where the Vulgar has, *Ad medietandam in agro inclinata jam die*, *St. Jerom* observes that according to the Hebrew it ought to be translated, *Ut loqueretur in agro declinante jam vespere*; and thus the Vulgar agrees not always word for word with the Translation, or rather with the critical Remarks of *St. Jerom*, in his Hebrew Questions upon *Genesis*, where he endeavours more to make the Hebrew Text agree with the Interpretation of the *Jews*, than he does in his new Translation commonly call'd the Vulgar, in which he deviates much less from the ancient Vulgar, which in his time was us'd throughout the whole Western Church.

In Chap. 25. Verse 8. where the Vulgar has, *Et deficiens mortuus est*, according to the Septuagint and ancient Vulgar, *St. Jerom* blames the Septuagint for having added the word *deficiens*, and the Reason he gives is, because *Abraham* cannot be said to have fail'd, or receiv'd any diminution: However the Septuagint in this place agrees with the Hebrew Text, and *St. Jerom's* Reason is no more than an ill grounded Allegory; he had not certainly consulted his Hebrew Text, when he made this Reflection upon the Septuagint Translation.

In Chap. 26. Verse 12. where we read in the Vulgar, *Invenit in ipso anno centuplum*; the Septuagint have translated, *Centuplum Hordei*; but *St. Jerom* observes that the Hebrew word signifies rather *Æstimatum* in that place than *Hordei*. This Hebrew word is not printed in the Vulgar, where perhaps it has been left out as unnecessary.

In Verse 17. of the same Chap. where the Vulgar has, *Ad torrentem Gerare*, *St. Jerom* blames the Septuagint for translating *vallem*, instead of *torrentem*: But the Hebrew word signifies both one and the other; and the Reason he gives why he corrects the Septuagint is a meer Allegory, which we ought not to take notice of.

In Verse 26. where the Vulgar has, *Ochozat amicus illius*, *St. Jerom* affirms, that instead of *Ochozat* or *Abuzal*, we ought to translate *Collegium*, and that the Hebrew word signifies not so much one single friend, as a whole company of friends; however it is in the present Vulgar as it was in the ancient. As for *St. Jerom* he follows the opinion

of the *Jews* of his time, more in his Hebrew Questions upon *Genesis*, than in his new Translation, where he has not so much corrected the Septuagint. To conclude, The vulgar Translation of this place seems to be better than St. *Jerom's* Correction, although he herein agrees with the *Chaldean* Paraphrase.

Gen. 26. 52 In Verse 52. of the same Chap. where we read in the Vulgar, *Invenimus aquam*, St. *Jerom* blames the Septuagint for having on the contrary translated, *Non invenimus aquam*. St. *Jerom's* Interpretation in our Vulgar is really the true one; and this different Interpretation comes only from the Hebrew word *Lo*, which may be translated either *ei* or *non*, there being only the sense which can determine the signification; the Septuagint have chose the latter, but the series of the Discourse shows they were mistaken.

### CHAP. XIII.

*The Vulgar compar'd with the Septuagint in the Books which are for certain St. Jerom's. Rules for the justifying of the same Vulgar; with some Reflections thereupon.*

WE may easily know by the Criticism we have already made, that the present Vulgar is not wholly St. *Jerom's*, although in generally speaking he is the only Author. As there are other Books in the same Vulgar which no one can doubt but are his, I thought it would not be wholly in vain, if we should examine some places of this Translation which are certainly St. *Jerom's*. I have then chosen the Book of *Ecclesiastes*, which we have two vulgar Translations of, plac'd upon different Columns, in the Works of this Father; and therefore we have no reason to doubt, but that one of those Columns wherein is the present Vulgar, is St. *Jerom's* new Translation, which he has joyn'd with the ancient Vulgar one made from the Septuagint, where there is also some mixture of the *Theodotion* Translation.

St. *Jerom* in his Preface to his Commentary upon *Ecclesiastes*, declares the method he took in making of his new Translation; and he affirms, that he rely'd upon the Authority of no one Interpreter, but that he translated purely from the Hebrew. He however adds, that

that he us'd the Septuagint more than any other Translation, where it differ'd not from the Hebrew Text. Lastly, He confesses that he had sometimes recourse to *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion*, so that he consulted all these Authors for the making of a good Translation. Let us now see whether he has always chose for the best out of these Interpreters.

First, There was no necessity methinks, if he follow'd only his own method, of changing these words in the ancient Vulgar in Chap. 1. Verse 4. *Generatio vadit, & Generatio venit*, into these others, *Eccl. 1. 4. Generatio preterit, & Generatio advenit*. And although the sense is the same both in one and the other Translation, the ancient Vulgar however expresses the Hebrew words better, and more according to the Letter, than ours does; and therefore there was no need of reforming it in this place.

Secondly, In Verse 6. of the same Chap. the ancient vulgar Translation seems to have more literally interpreted the Hebrew words thus; *Vadit ad Austrum, & gyrat ad Aquilonem; Gyran gyran vadit spiritus, & in circulos suos revertitur spiritus*, than St. *Jerom* has in his new Translation. I speak not here of the sense which we ought to make of these words, which are hard to be explain'd, but I am perswaded that the Septuagint have interpreted the Hebrew words of this place better than St. *Jerom*. When a place is obscure, and may be translated several ways, the Translator ought not then to deviate from the Grammatical sense; and this the Septuagint have better observ'd than St. *Jerom*.

In Verse 7. where the Vulgar has, *Mare non redundat*, the Septuagint have more literally express'd the Hebrew Text by, *Mare non impletur*. Wherefore I know not why St. *Jerom* chang'd their Translation of this place, since he publicly declares that he would not alter the ancient Vulgar, but upon good account. He has also chang'd some other words in the same Verse, without any reason he had for so doing.

In Verse 8. where we read in the Vulgar, *Cuncta res difficiles*, the Septuagint have translated, *Omnes res graves*; but the first Translation is the best. As the Hebrew word signifies as well *res* as *sermo*; the Septuagint who often translate the Hebrew too literally, and sometimes without observing the sense, do not always choose the best and properest sense; and they are often obscure, by following the Letter too closely; as in Verse 10. of this Chapter, where they have translated word for word from the Hebrew, *Non est omne recens sub Sole*, where-

whereas St. *Jerom* has translated more clearly, *Nihil sub Sole novum*. These alterations are recommendable in St. *Jerom*; and we cannot deny, but that our Vulgar excels in this the ancient one in many places. But on the contrary, St. *Jerom* in many places seems to take too much liberty; for under pretence of avoiding Barbarisms, in translating too literally the Hebrew words, he sometimes straitens the sense of the Original, and deviates too much from the Letter, which he ought not to do. It is true, that in other places his Translation is admirable, and that without keeping too scrupulously to the words, he expresses excellently well the Author's thought, which is a certain sign, he understood Hebrew very well; as where he translates some

Eccl. 1. 8.

Future Tenses by the Present, and changes one Case for another, according to the Genius of this Tongue. For example, In Verse 8. of this Chapter, he has very well translated, *Saturatur, & impletur*,

Eccl. 1. 11.

whereas the Septuagint have translated according to the rigor of the Letter, *Saturabitur, & implebitur*. And in Verse 11. where we read, *Non est priorum memoria*, his Translation is much better than the Septuagint's, who have translated, *Non est memoria primis*. In a word, St. *Jerom*'s Translation has this excellency, that it takes away most of the Equivocations which are hard to be avoided, if we follow too closely the Grammatical sense.

Eccl. 1. 14.

In Verse 14. of the same Chap. where we read in the Vulgar, *Afflictio spiritus*, St. *Jerom* observes, that his Jewish Doctor taught him, that in this place this word signifi'd rather *Afflictionem* and *Malitiam*, than *Passionem* and *Voluntatem*. Wherefore he prefer'd the opinion of his Master, before the Septuagint Translation, *Aquilas*'s, *Symmachus*'s, and the *Theodotion*. Besides, he has learnedly observ'd, that the Septuagint have translated this word rather from the Syriack than the Hebrew; there are nevertheless some learned *Rabbins*, who approve of the Septuagint Translation of this place.

Eccl. 1. 15.

In Verse 15. where the Vulgar has, *Difficile perversi corriguntur*, the Septuagint have translated better, *Perversum non poterit adornari*. St. *Jerom* ought not to have limited to a moral sense, what is generally and without restriction express'd in the Hebrew Text: And what is afterwards said, *Stultorum infinitus est numerus*, is yet farther from the Original, where it is according to the Letter, *Defectus nequit numerari*; which fault in the Translation comes also from the restriction of the sense, because St. *Jerom* did not sufficiently consider the style of the Book of *Ecclesiastes*, where the Author uses certain terms taken generally from natural things, which may afterwards be appli'd to others, especially in things relating to Morality. In

In Verse 18. where we read in the Vulgar, *Labor & afflictio spiritus*, the Hebrew say only, *Afflictio spiritus*; and in the ancient Vulgar we read, *Passio venti, seu presumptio spiritus*. These are two different Translations of the same Hebrew words which have been joyn'd, which is usual in this ancient Vulgar. To conclude, I am of opinion, that what we have already said concerning St. *Jerom*'s way of making his new Translation from the Hebrew, is sufficient to show us particularly what method he observ'd in so great a Work. We shall only add some general Reflections to what we have already observ'd, whereby we may more thoroughly understand St. *Jerom*'s method.

We may then observe, that although he endeavour'd to translate rather according to the sense than to the letter, and that he often neglects the Grammatical sense, he does not however always keep close to this method; and there are some places where he follows the Letter more exactly than the Septuagint, which sometimes makes his Translation to be obscure. Besides, as he follows not always exactly the words of his Text, it would be dangerous to correct the present Hebrew Text by his Translation, and to fancy that he had other Hebrew Copies than these at present. We ought not also to follow him in all the places, where he prefers the reading of his Hebrew Copy before the Septuagint, as if the *Jews* of his time had had better Copies than the ancient Greek Interpreters. This we ought to observe in reading of his Commentaries upon the Bible, and especially those upon the *Prophets*, where he blames the Septuagint for having ill read, and taking one Letter for another in the Hebrew. This is however sometimes true, and St. *Jerom* falls into the same Error as well as others; and therefore we ought not wholly to rely upon the Hebrew Copies, whether ancient or modern; but it is fit we should examine them according to the Rules of Criticism; and by this means we may judge which is the best of the various Readings which are in the different Copies. The bare Authority of St. *Jerom*, or of the *Jews* of his time, ought not to prejudice us against the Septuagint, nor the Septuagint prejudice us against St. *Jerom*.

In fine, If we will judge aright of St. *Jerom*'s Translation, we ought not wholly to rely upon the new Translations, as if he was always out where he agrees not with them; but we are to observe the Rules we have already laid down, which give us fuller notions of the Hebrew Tongue, than those in the *Rabbins*, or new *Grammarians* Books. We may apply these Rules to St. *Jerom*'s Translation, as we have

have already appli'd them to the Greek Septuagint. It is true, that St. *Jerom* being nigher our time, and having learnt Hebrew of the *Jews of Tiberias*, his Hebrew Copy oftener agrees with the *Massoret* Text, than that which the Septuagint made use of. But for all that he sometimes deviates from the *Massoret*, whether it be that he follow'd the ancient Vulgar, or that there were various Readings in his Hebrew Copy.

I could prove this by many Examples, and justify St. *Jerom's* Translation, in many places where it agrees not with the present Hebrew Text; but without enlarging any more upon this Subject, it will be sufficient if I produce an Extract of a Letter I formerly writ to a learned Missionary upon this Point, who ask'd me for some Illustrations upon a passage of *Zechariah*, which he had set down according to the Vulgar; and some Protestants of *Sedan* where this Missionary then was, pretending that the Vulgar in this place deviated from the Original, I justifi'd it in this manner, by shewing the exact agreement of this Translation with the Hebrew Text, although it differ'd from the sense of the modern Interpreters.

*Ze.h.9.11* The Question was about Verse 11. *Zeab.* Chap. 9. where it is in the Vulgar, *Tu quoq; in sanguine Testamenti tui emisisti vinctos tuos de lacu.* According to the present Hebrew it ought to be translated, *Tu quoq; in sanguine Testamenti tui emisisti vinctos tuos.* And what makes a considerable difference betwixt these two Translations is, that in the Hebrew the Pronouns Relatives, *tu, tui, tuos*, are in the Feminine Gender, and therefore they make a different sense from that of the Vulgar. Some Interpreters could defend the Vulgar no other ways, but by saying, that the *Jews* had falsifi'd the Hebrew in this place; but we ought not to give credit to their bare word.

It is more probable to say that the Pronoun *Tu*, which is Feminine in the present Hebrew, is no sufficient proof that it must here be express'd in the Feminine Gender. For it is certain, that the *Massorets* who have fix'd the reading of the Hebrew as it is at present, have observ'd, that this Feminine is sometimes took for the Masculine; as for example, in Chap. 11. *Numbers*, Verse 15. we read in the Hebrew *Tu* in the Feminine, as it is in this place of *Zechariah*, and yet nevertheless it ought to be explain'd in the Masculine. The *Massoret* who made this Observation at the same time added, that there were three other places where this Pronoun *Tu* in the Feminine ought to be expounded in the Masculine. We find the same Observation *Deut. 5.* *Ezek. 28.* of the *Massoret* in Chap. 5. of *Deuteronomy*, and Chap. 28. of *Ezekiel*.

In

In all these places the Pronoun *Tu* is in the Feminine Gender, yet is to be explain'd in the Masculine. Now although the *Massoret* Rule in general is true, we cannot however from thence draw any certain Rule to what places it ought to be appli'd. When this happens, we are only to observe the sense, and we ought not easily to leave the ancient Translations, under pretence of their not agreeing with the modern Interpreters. We ought not to condemn them because they agree not with the Hebrew Text, for as much as the Hebrew Copies have not always been the same; besides, by these at present we may justify the ancient Interpreters of the Scripture.

We may farther add, That the Points which serve at present instead of Vowels, not being then in the Hebrew Text, the Interpreters then had the liberty of reading the Pronoun *Tu* either in the Masculine or Feminine. Thus in the Chap. 1. *Job*, where we read *Atta* *Job 1.* *Tu* without the Letter *He*, we might have made it Feminine, if there had not been certain Points which make it Masculine. This various Reading which is caus'd by the Letter *He* being wanting, has been observ'd in the *great Massoret*, where it is observ'd that there are 29 *Great Mass.* places where this *He* is wanting in the end of the word, and all these places are set down.

Thus we may easily by the Rules of the *Massoret*, defend in this place of *Zechariah* the Translation of *Emisisti* in the second person, for *Emisti* in the first, according to the present Hebrew. It only depends upon the *Jod* in the end of the word, which is often superfluous; and the *little Massoret* gives a Rule concerning the *Jod Jabir*, or superfluous *Jod*; and besides the *great Massoret* observes, there are 43 places in the Scripture where *Jod* is writ at the end of words, and yet ought not to be read. Without producing all these Examples, I shall only bring one much like this before us.

In Chap. 1. *Jerem.* Verse 34. where we read in the Vulgar, *Docuisti* *Jer. 1. 34.* the Hebrew Verb is writ with a *Jod* at the end, as if it was in the first person, and ought to be translated, *Docui*. But the *little Massoret* observes, that we ought to read it without a *Jod* in the first person, and the Translators agree, by conforming themselves to the *Massoret*.

We shall have sufficiently justifi'd St. *Jerom's* Translation of this place, if we explain why he has taken Pronouns in the Masculine Gender, which were Feminine in the Hebrew; and for as much as this variation proceeds from the various pointings, we may easily give Reasons thereof. As Points were not invented in his time, he

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had the liberty of reading otherwise than we at present do, especially if the *Jews* of that time, whom he very often consulted, were of the same opinion. We may however observe, that St. *Jerom* has not exactly follow'd the reading of his Hebrew Copy, but that he sometimes keeps to the Septuagint Translation; and this he seems to have done in this place of *Zechariab*. He follows also sometimes the other Greek Translations, and very often what his *Jewish* Doctor told him. However it is, this is certain, that by the help of these Rules and some others which I at present pass over, we may justify many places of the Vulgar, and the other ancient Translations of the Bible. The modern Interpreters of the Scripture did very ill to condemn what they understood not; but it was impossible for them to give any other judgement, not having any other knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue, than what they had learnt from the Books of the modern Grammarians, whom they seem not to have seriously consider'd. I could here treat of the Corrections of the Vulgar, according to the Decree of the Council of *Trent*; but there are so many who have already treated of them, that I may hold my tongue; and I am of opinion, it will be sufficient for me to give in short the Method which was observ'd in this Reformation, especially under the Popes *Sixtus* the V. and *Clement* the VIII. What is most worthy observation concerning the correction of the Vulgar is, that it was not made by the original Hebrew, which St. *Jerom* had translated from into Latin, but from the ancient Latin Copies of this Translation, and the Hebrew was consulted only where the Latin made not out the sense, and where by the reading of the Original, one might plainly see there was a palpable Error of the Transcriber. Thus for example, instead of *Fontem*, *Fortem* has been put in, and instead of, *Saculum & Malitia*, *Saculum & Militia* has been put; and thus several other words have been alter'd, where there were manifest Errors of Transcribers. Some private persons, and particularly *Robert Stephens*, had very well begun this Reformation, before the Decree of the Council of *Trent*.

The Divines of *Lowvain* endeavour'd also after the Council of *Trent*, to publish as correct an Edition of the Vulgar as they could. Several learned Criticks since that time have by Order of the Popes, took pains about the Reformation of the Vulgar, to make it as it is at present; and yet I dare say there are many things which ought to be corrected, most of which I would mark, but that I am afraid of being tedious. It is enough for us to know, that this opinion is confirm'd

*Sixtus V.*  
*Clement*  
*VIII.*

firm'd by the Authority of the most learned *Catholick* Doctors, and by those also who help'd to make this Correction, as may be seen in the Preface to the last Edition of the Vulgar, review'd by Order of Pope *Clement* the VIII. where it is in express terms, that there were many things designedly let alone, which might have been corrected, if they had thought fit.

## CHAP. XIV.

*In what sense the ancient Latin Translation was declar'd authentick by the Council of Trent. Whether it be the only authentick one. Several critical Remarks upon this Subject.*

IT seems to be altogether unnecessary for us to examine the Questions relating to the Authority of the Vulgar Translation, after so many learned Divines, who have thoroughly treated upon this Point: I dare however boldly say, there are few persons who have understood the intention of the Council of *Trent*, when it pronounc'd this ancient Latin Translation authentick. I shall not stay to give the different opinions of Doctors, whether *Catholicks* or *Protestants*, concerning this Matter, because one may find them in other Books; besides, my method is not so much to relate what others have already said, as to tell in short what I think is truest upon each Point. Most of those who have bandied this Question, have not understood it, & they have rather shown zeal and passion, than sense and judgement; *Periit judicium postquam res transit in affectum*. Why do the *Jews* believe no other Copies of the Bible but the Hebrew Text, unless it be that these Books are read in their Synagogues, and that they understand Hebrew? The Church wherefore had it for the first Centuries so much respect for the Septuagint, but only because it was a long time before it knew any other? Whence comes it that the Western Church equally esteems the vulgar Latin Translation with the Septuagint, and the *Jewish* Hebrew Text, unless it be that this Latin Translation is publickly us'd, and that most of the Divines understand not Greek or Hebrew? If then we examine without prejudice the Authority of the Scripture, without siding either with the *Jews* or *Christians*, whether

*Aug. con.*  
*Julian.*



*Catholicks or Protestants*, we shall do them all justice, by declaring the Hebrew Text of the Bible to be truly authentick, and that all the Translations of the Scripture which have been made without deceit from the Originals, whether in Greek or Latin, ancient or modern, are also in their way authentick. So that this Question which is usually argued with so much heat, whether the Vulgar is the only authentick and true Scripture, seems to me to be very frivolous.

Before the Council of *Trent*, which declar'd this Translation authentick, by preferring it before all other Latin Translations of the Bible, this Question was not much argued. Wherefore it is necessary to explain the proper signification of the word *Authentick*, according to the intention of the Council, to the end we may at once resolve the Difficulties hence arising.

We cannot take this word in its most ancient and proper signification, which is to mark out the first and true Original of a thing, to distinguish it from the Copy; as when we speak of the Original of a *Will*, that signifies the *Will* as it was writ by the Author. In this sense we should have no authentick Scripture, since what we have, consists only in Copies, which have their failures, as well as the other Books which men have been the Depositories of. I believe, that even as to the New Testament, the first Fathers of the Church have not affirm'd that they had seen the true Originals; and besides, although many of them have pretended, that the Hereticks had in some places falsifi'd the Greek Copies of the New Testament, which serv'd instead of the Originals, they have nevertheless acknowledg'd these Copies for true Scripture, and consequently to be authentick.

There is then another way of explaining this word *Authentick*, which we find in the *Civilians* Books, and the Councils, and from *Macairius*. thence we are to take its true signification. *Macairius*, Patriarch of *Antioch*, and some other Bishops of his persuasion, having brought the testimony of some of the ancient Fathers in the 6th. general Council, to maintain their opinions, the Popes Deputies affirm'd, that these Authorities had been corrupted by those who alledged them, and demanded that there might be brought, τα αυθεντικα Βιβλια, authentick Copies, which were in the Library of the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, to be compar'd with those of the Patriarch *Macairius*. These authentick Books which they had recourse to in this Council, were not true Originals, but only faithful Copies, which we could not suspect had been alter'd; and so they were call'd authentick, only in relation to the Copies produc'd by the *Monothelites*, which were suspected to have been alter'd by them. It

It is the same with the Vulgar Latin Translation; for as it was absolutely necessary for the Western Church to have a Translation of the Bible, to be guided by as well in Disputes, as in Sermons and other publick actions, the Fathers of the Council of *Trent* wisely declar'd for the ancient Latin Interpretation, and that of all other Latin ones, that only should be call'd authentick, because the others which had been made during the Schism, were to be suspected: Besides, that the Vulgar had for several Centuries been authoriz'd in the Latin Church; which however makes it not infallible and free from all faults, since the same Council commanded it to be corrected, and those who did correct it were neither Prophets, nor inspir'd by God. To which we may add, that the Fathers of the Council examin'd not this Translation according to the Rules of Criticism, thereby to judge whether it agreed with the Original, but follow'd herein the usual custom of the Church, which in these Matters authorizes the most ancient, and which is least suspected of Errors. Now it is certain, that of all the Latin Translations of the Bible at that time, the Vulgar claim'd this preheminance.

Although the other Translations have not been declar'd authentick, they nevertheless are so, if the Authors of them dealt ingenuously, and had no other design but to explain the Original as well as they could. There is only this difference betwixt the Vulgar, and the other Translations, that we are oblig'd to acknowledge the Vulgar for authentick, because it has been so declar'd, and not the others, which the Council never medled with.

We may more particularly explain how a Translation becomes authentick, by the Latin Translation of *Justinian's Constitutions*, which is call'd authentick. The *Civilians* who have diligently enquir'd after the Reasons of this title of Authentick, given to a Latin Translation of the same Constitutions, which are otherwise call'd in the Original, have affirm'd, they were call'd the Authenticks, in relation to another Latin Translation of the same Constitutions, which agreed not so exactly with the Original; and it has not so great Authority as this Translation, not only because it is barely a Translation, but because it is the Translation or Copy of an Act.

Cardinal *Palavicini* who understood this Argument very well has observ'd, that the Council of *Trent* in declaring the Vulgar authentick, did not wholly lay aside the Hebrew Text, nor the Greek Septuagint, nor even the other Translations, as Father *Paul* seems unjustly to have blam'd the Fathers of this Council, only to make them appear

*Alciat. Contius.*

*Card. Pala vic. in his History of the Council of Trent. B. 6. Chap. 17.*

pear ridiculous. Wherefore the same Cardinal judiciously brings for example an act of importance, translated into another language, and affirms, that if this Translation be a faithful one, we may call it authentick, because credit is to be given to it as well as to the Original. *Se la Traduzione è fedele potrà dirsi Autentica e basterà per la decisione di quelle liti che dependano dalla contenenza grossa è principale di si fatta Scrittura.* Whence he afterwards concludes, that there is nothing falser than this way of Father Paul's arguing. If the Vulgar be good, it must necessarily follow that all the other Translations which agree not wholly with it are bad; on the contrary he affirms, that it is impossible to make an exact Translation without any faults at all. Thus the Council of Trent, according to the same Historian, when it declar'd the Vulgar authentick, would not wholly exempt it from faults. He lastly adds, that truly many pious men are of the contrary opinion, but the Church condemns not those who are of this; *E pia sententia d'alcuni; m'a la chiesa non condanna chi non la segue.*

I pass by this Cardinal's Reasons for the proving of his opinion, because we may find them related at large in *Serarius* and *Mariana* the Jesuits; which are confirmed by the most learned persons at the Council of Trent. We may yet add other Authorities, and amongst others that of *Genebrard*, one of the greatest Maintainers of the Vulgar, who would not condemn either the Hebrew Text, nor the Septuagint, nor the other Translations, as if the Council had condemn'd them by authorizing of the Vulgar. But he thought the Fathers of the Council by their Declaration only compar'd the ancient Latin Interpreter with the modern ones, who increas'd the Translations of the Bible without any reason or design, but only to oppose the Vulgar, which had been receiv'd and approv'd of by the whole Western Church for several Centuries. *Tantum comparat Synodus Vulgatum cum ceteris ejusdem generis propter recentiorum Hereticorum, & aliorum novatorum temeritatem, qui novas subinde versiones expectant, veteres fastidiunt, proq; innata novarum rerum cupiditate antiqua novis posthabent.*

In truth what can be more unjust than the Quarrels of some Protestants, and even of the most learned amongst them, with the Fathers of the Council of Trent, by reason of their Decree concerning the Authority of the Vulgar? I will not say that *Fulverus*, *Sixtinus Amama*, *Causabon*, and several others of that Party were malicious or ignorant persons, or that they did it out of malice, when they accus'd the Church of Rome of Tyranny, for making of this Decree in a general Council, as if they had impos'd it as necessary upon all the faithful, to believe that the

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ancient Latin Translation is the only Scripture which we have at present in the Church. No one can deny, but that these Protestants show a great deal of passion and prejudice, who would not seriously examine the meaning of the Fathers of this Council, whose wise conduct, in doing the whole World justice, can never be sufficiently admir'd. So likewise there are several of the most judicious and learned Protestants, who have commended the prudence of those assembled in this Council, especially *Drusius*, who frankly confesses, that they had reason to authorize the ancient Interpreters Translation, because the modern ones were not better than this ancient one, and perhaps they might have greater faults. Wherefore this Author freely corrects the Errors which he found in *Tremellius*, whose Translation was then much esteem'd by the Protestants; he could not allow the making of whole Translations of the Scripture. *Fagius* also often defends the ancient Latin Translation, and endeavours to defend the faults which some unjustly accuse it of.

On the other side some Catholics, who through an indiscreet zeal would allow of no other Scripture but the ancient Latin Translation, and who thought that the Council of Trent by making it authentick, had thereby freed it from all faults, have made several Protestants believe, that this was the opinion of the Church of Rome, without considering that the most learned Divines of the Romish Communion condemn'd it. This zeal for the Vulgar has chiefly appear'd in Spain, where the Inquisition is severe. Many persons have upon this very account been put into Prison, and oblig'd (as *Mariana* affirms) to plead their Cause in Fetters: *Viri eruditionis opinione præstantes è vinculis cogebantur Causam dicere, haud levi salutis existimationisq; discrimine.* Most of the Spanish Divines at that time durst not freely speak their opinions, and it was necessary for some time to yield to the violence of these indiscreet Zealots, who accus'd before the Judges all those of impiety who favour'd not their opinion. *Mariana* however, although a Jesuit and a Spaniard, very much condemns this heat, and he has shown in a Book which he writ upon this Subject, that the Vulgar has its faults, as well as the other Translations.

The general Assembly held at Rome, for the expounding of the Decrees of the Council of Trent, heretofore answer'd a whole University, which was govern'd by the Jesuits, that nothing could be said against the Vulgar Edition of the Bible, and that we ought to observe even the very Points and Comma's. *Leo Allatius* who produc'd this Act, affirms also that we ought entirely to submit thereto, and

*Drus. ad loc. diff. in Pentat.*

*Paul. Fag. Præf. ad Collat. Transl. Vet. Test.*

*Mariana. pro edit. Vulg. C. 1.*

*Allat. anti. mad. in an. tiq. Etrusc.*

and

and that it is a fault not to obey the holy general Assembly. But it is very probable that this Declaration was never receiv'd as a Law, even in *Rome* it self, no more than several other Declarations of the same Congregation, since Cardinal *Palavicini* is of a clear contrary opinion in his *History of the Council of Trent*, and has follow'd the opinion of *Vega*, who in this Declaration is expressly condemn'd.

We have then the liberty of going to the Hebrew Text, the Septuagint, and even to all the modern Translations of the Bible, for the attaining of a greater knowledge of the holy Scripture. This opinion agrees with the Church, who receives the different Translations of the same places of Scripture, in authorizing of the Latin Translation of the New and Old Testament, where the same words are differently translated; as also the words of the Scripture in the *Missels*, and other Ecclesiastical Books, are interpreted another way. And besides, as has already been observ'd, the Chronology of the *Roman Martyrology* agrees better with the ancient Latin Translation made from the Septuagint, than *St. Jerom's* new one, which has been for several Centuries publickly us'd in the Church. I do not believe there are at present any *Spanish Divines*, who will dare to compare the Bible of *Alcala*, where the Vulgar is plac'd betwixt the Hebrew and the Greek, to our Saviour's being upon the Cross betwixt two Thieves. This comparison however was heretofore made by *Nicholas Ramus*, Bishop of *Cuba*, in speaking of the Edition of *Alcala*, according to the silly observation of Cardinal *Ximenes*, who condemn'd his great Work. On the contrary, I find at present that every one approves of those great Works we have upon the Bible in several Languages: Which plainly shows, that we ought not only to consult the Vulgar upon the difficulties of the Scripture, but we are likewise to consult the Original Hebrew, and the best Translations from that Original, in what Languages soever they are.

*Mr. Le Jay.* I confess I never understood *Mr. Le Jay's* drift, in putting the Publick to great charge, by giving of it a Bible with most of the Oriental Translations, and by condemning at the same time this great Work by an unskillful Preface, wherein he prefers the Vulgar before all others, as if the Vulgar had been the first and true Original of the Scripture. *Pro certo & indubitato apud nos esse debet Vulgatam Editionem quæ communi Catholice Ecclesie lingua circumfertur, verum esse ac genuinum Scripturæ fontem.*

After such a Declaration as this, it was unnecessary to print the *Hebrew and Samaritan Text*, the *Samaritan, Greek, Chaldee, Syriack*, and

*Nicol. Ram.*  
in *Astert.*  
Vulg.  
*Cardin.*  
*Xim. Prol.*  
in *Bib.*  
*Complut.*

and *Arabick* Translations, since the Vulgar Latin one is become the true Original of the Scripture, unless we say, that all these Works are printed only for the more easie explaining of the Vulgar. But we should too much confine the use of the Originals of the Bible, and the ancient Translations, in setting of them down only for the better interpreting of the Vulgar.

It is more proper for us to give to the Originals of the Bible, the Authority they may claim as Originals, and to the Translations what they ought to claim as Translations, and faithful Copies from the Originals, than to approve of, unskillfully and against the Authority of the Council of *Trent*, the faults which are in the Vulgar. We ought however for quietness sake to use in publick no other Translation, than what the Church presents to us; and we shall imitate *St. Augustine* herein, who forbad the reading of *St. Jerom's* new Translation in his Diocess, although he had an esteem for it, and was fully perswaded of the capacity and piety of the Author. We ought however to observe, that *St. Augustine* would not perhaps so vigorously have oppos'd *St. Jerom's* new Translation, if he had not been prejudic'd by the commonly receiv'd opinion, that the Septuagint Translation then read in the Church had been inspir'd by God. But we have not at present any of these prejudices for the Vulgar, although it has been declar'd authentick by a general Council. Let us therefore in this follow the Maxim of *Gregory the Great*, who often prefer'd *St. Jerom's* new Translation, before the ancient Vulgar, which had been no less authoriz'd for several Centuries throughout the whole Western Church, than the present Vulgar. Every Translation made by able persons, and not suspected of deceit, is in it self authentick, as a Copy from an authentick Act.

## CHAP. XV.

*Of the Translations of the Scripture which have been us'd by other Churches, and especially of the Syriack Translations. A Criticism upon the printed Syriack Translation. Several Reflections upon this Subject, and the Syriack Tongue.*

**T**HE Christian Religion having in a little time spread it self over several Provinces of the Empire, the Scripture was presently made common to the people, and translated into their Languages. But as there was for several Ages no other receiv'd Scripture but the Septuagint Translation, these Translations were made from the Greek and not from the Hebrew. There were only the *Syrians* or *Chaldeans* who had of two sorts, the one from the Hebrew Text, and the other from the Greek Septuagint. We have at present Translations of the Bible into most of the Tongues of the World, but they are not all the same with those ancient ones mention'd in the Works of the Fathers, who affirm, that the Scripture was in their times translated into most Languages of the World. We shall only speak of those which are known to us, and we need not enlarge any farther upon this Subject, after having examin'd the Greek Septuagint, whence these other Translations have been taken.

Some Criticks before us have observ'd, that *Gregory Abulpharagius*, who divides the *Syrians* into Eastern and Western, speaks of two *Syriack* Translations, one made from the Hebrew, and the other from the Greek Septuagint. He terms the first simple, with relation without doubt to the second, which is a Translation from the Greek, or because the Septuagint is in some places rather a Paraphrase than a Translation. This simple Translation from the Hebrew is us'd according to *Abulpharagius* by the Eastern *Syrians*, whereas the Western ones make use both of one and the other. The *Scholiasts* sometimes in their Notes mention the *Syriack* Translation made from the Greek Septuagint. We ought not however to imagine with some *Syrian* Doctors, that the Bible was translated out of the Hebrew into *Syriack* in *Salomon's* time, at the request of *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*. Some of these

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Doctors however limit this to the *Pentateuch*, the Books of *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*, *Samuel*, the *Kings*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *Job*. But this is a fancy of the Eastern People, who seldom diligently enquire into the things they relate, and are ignorant of most of the things which have happen'd amongst them. They add, that the other Books of the Old Testament were translated into *Syriack* from the Hebrew, in the time of *Abdgar*, King of *Edeffe*. But since they bring no proof hereof, we need not confute so improbable an opinion, which however *Gabriel Sionita*, a learned *Maronite*, seems to believe, and he scruples not to affirm, that it is grounded upon a Tradition approv'd by most of the *Syrians* and *Chaldeans*. He confirms it by the testimony of a *Syrian* Author, which he takes to be a very ancient one, and he observes, that some *Syrians* who do not think this Translation to be so very ancient, affirm that it was all made under King *Abdgar*. However he prefers the former opinion before this, because *St Paul* cites in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, a passage in the *Psalms*, which is no where to be found as it is there cited, but in the *Syriack* Translation. *Ebed Jesu* in his Catalogue of *Syrian* Writers, mentions one *Maraba*, who according to him translated the Old Testament out of *Greek* into *Syriack*. But the *Syrian* Church being much antecedent than this *Maraba*, we ought not to doubt but she read the Scriptures in her own Tongue, whether it be that they were translated from the Hebrew, or else from the Greek, as is more probable, because the Church is of the same age with the Greek Septuagint Translation; and it is moreover certain, that the *Syrians* have translated the Septuagint into their Tongue, as *Eusebius* had copi'd it from the *Hexaplast* of *Origen*.

As for the *Syriack* Translation in the *English* and *French Polyglotte*, it was without doubt made from the Hebrew, although it has in some places been corrected by the Septuagint Translation, or rather made to agree with the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Translations made from the Septuagint. It answers in many places almost word for word to the Hebrew Text; so that we may easily believe, it was rather made by a *Jew* than a *Christian*. But as the *Syrian* Transcribers consulted not the Hebrew, in the writing of their *Syrian* Translation, there have many considerable changes and additions hapned: Besides, they have often been mistaken, and have left many faults in their Copies, which might have easily been corrected, without the help of other *Syrian* Copies.

*Gabriel Sionita*,  
on. Præf. in  
Psalter.  
Syr. Soa-  
ded, Episcop  
Hadeth.

*Ebed Jesu*  
de Script.  
Chaldeis.

Gen. 14. For example, In Chap. 14. Gen. where the Hebrew has *Goiim*, Nations, we read in the Syriack Translation, *Goloie*, and the Latin Translator has from thence made a People call'd *Gelites*.

Gen. 22. In Chap. 22. of the same Book, where we read in the Hebrew Text, *In the Land of Moria*, it is in the Syriack Translation, *O Mou-roie*; and the Latin Interpreter has translated it, *Amorrhæorum*, as if the *Amorrhites* were meant in that place. These sort of faults in the Syriack proceed partly from Transcribers, and partly from those who have pointed the Syriack according to their own fancy, without consulting the original Hebrew.

Gen. 32. 32 Thus in Chap. 32. Verse 32. Gen. the *Syrians* who understood not what the Hebrew word *Nafce*, signifi'd in this place, have let it stand, whence they afterwards made *Genesis*; whence the Interpreter who consulted not the Hebrew has translated, *Nervum Muliebrem*, instead of *Nervum luxatum*, or some such thing; and since that the word *Genesis* has been put in *Ferrarius's* Syriack Dictionary, which certainly is a word corrupted from the Hebrew, which afterward had a particular signification given it.

Nomenclat.  
Syriack  
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Gen. 37. 3. In Chap. 37. Gen. Verse 3. where *Joseph's* Coat is spoken of, it is in the Syriack, *Phedioto*, which the Interpreter has translated, *Fimbriatam*, *Fring'd*; and in the Syriack Dictionary by this word is understood, *A Sacerdotal Vest*, which cannot be meant in this place; and I doubt not but it was at first read *Pheteto*, which signifies the same as the Hebrew word *Paffim*, which the Septuagint have very well translated *Kariam*, and the Author of the Vulgar, *Polymitam*.

In Chap. 6. *Exod.* Verse 26. we read, through the Transcribers fault, by reason of the likeness of the two Letters, *Coph* and *Al*, *Col*, *All*, instead of the Preposition *Al*, which is in the Hebrew Text. But for fear of being tedious, I shall in general say, that the Syriack Translation is very faulty, and that it ought to be corrected by some learned Critick, who thoroughly understands the Syriack and Hebrew, as well as the Greek and Arabick Tongues, who ought also to review the Latin Translation, where there are many places ill translated.

I shall not spend time in showing the places where the Syriack Translation leaves the Hebrew Text to follow the Septuagint, either because the Syriack Translator has had other Hebrew Copies than we at present have, or rather because the *Syrians*, as has already been observ'd, have took the liberty to correct some places of their Translation by the Arabick, or other Syriack Translations made from the Septuagint. For example, In Chap. 2. Gen. Verse 2. we read in the

Gen. 2. 2.

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Syriack Translation as in the Septuagint, *On the sixth day*, whereas it is in the Hebrew Text, *On the seventh day*; yet nevertheless this last Reading of the Hebrew is very ancient, since St. *Jerom* mentions it. In Chap. 4. Gen. Verse 8. this clause in the Septuagint, *Let us go in- to the Field*, has been translated in the Syriack, although it was not in the original Hebrew in St. *Jerom's* time. In Chap. 4. Gen. Verse 15. it is in the Syriack, according to the Septuagint and Vulgar Translations, *It shall not be so*; but we ought to translate according to the *Massoret* Hebrew, *Therefore*.

In Chap. 8. Verse 7. where the *Raven* is spoken of which *Noah* sent out of the *Ark*, it is in the Syriack according to the Septuagint, that the *Raven* return'd not; yet the negative Particle is not in the Hebrew, neither was it in St. *Jerom's* time, as we have already shown. It is then plain that this Syriack Translation made from the Hebrew, has degenerated much from its ancient purity, and that it is at present a mixt Translation, since it has been corrected in many places by a Translation made from the Septuagint.

This same Syriack Translation is not more exact in the other Books of the Bible, than in the *Pentateuch*. There are a great many Errors of Transcribers, who have confounded many Letters which are alike in the Syriack, because in the writing out of their Copies, they have had no recourse to the Original Hebrew. I would not however say, that all these various Readings in the Syriack are Errors, for as much as in some places the *Jewish* Transcribers may have been to blame, who have not been more infallible than the others. Thus in Chap. 3. *Josh. 3:* *Joshua*, where the Hebrew Text has *Adam*, which is the name of a City, and the Vulgar Translation has *Adom*, we read in the Syriack, *Oram*, and in the Latin Translation from the Syriack, *Aram*, which proceeds from the two Letters, *Resh* and *Daleth*, which are alike both in the Syriack and Hebrew. So that in such places we may as well blame the *Jewish* Transcribers as the *Syrian*; however it is more probable that the *Syrian* Translation is faulty in this place.

In Chap. 7. *Josh.* where we read in the Hebrew Text, *Achan*, it is in the Syrian Translation, *Achar*; and I am of opinion this last Reading ought to be prefer'd before the first, because it agrees better with the Etymology of this word, which is set down in the last Verse of this Chapter.

The Errors however of Transcribers, are more frequent in the Syriack Translation, than in the Original Hebrew, because most of the *Jews* who writ their Copies, understood Hebrew, whereas the

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*Syrians* having no knowledge thereof, have committed many faults, for want of consulting the Hebrew Text in the copying of their Translation; which usually happens in proper Names, as may be prov'd by many Examples. Thus in Chap. 9. *Joshua*, we read in the Syriack, *Og, King of Mathnin*, whereas we ought according to the Hebrew Text to read, *King of Basan*; and we may plainly see that this variation proceeds from the Syrian Transcriber, who has confounded the Letters *B* and *M*. The same thing happens in the word, *Kiriat Jaarin*, in the same Chapter, where the Syrian Transcriber has writ, *Kiriat Naarin*. No doubt but this difference proceeds from the likeness of the two Letters *J* and *N* in the Syriack.

This is the reason why in Chap. 7. of *Judges*, we read *Nedubaal*, instead of *Jerubaal*; and in Chap. 11. of the same Book, *Nephtai*, instead of *Jephtai*. But it would be tedious to make a longer Catalogue of the Errors of Transcribers, in the Copies of the Syriack Translation, of which we may say what St. *Jerom* heretofore said of the Septuagint Copies; *Non tam Hebræa, quam barbara & Sarmatica esse nomina*. We may farther observe, that the Syrian Translator has instead of proper Names, set down the signification of those proper Names; as in Chap. 3. of *Judges*, where both the Hebrew and Vulgar have, *Cusan Rasataim*, we read in the Syriack, *Cusam, The Ungodly*; on the contrary, he sometimes sets down proper Names where there are none. But as these faults are usual with all the ancient Translators of the Scripture, we need stay no longer hereupon.

I shall say nothing concerning the changing of Numbers, for as much as there is nothing more usual in all the Translations of the Bible, than these sort of changes, and it is enough that we have already given the true Reasons of them. Thus in Chap. 16. Verse 5. *Judges*, where we read in the Hebrew and Vulgar, 1100. there is in the Syriack Translation, 1300.

In Chap. 4. of the first Book of *Samuel*, Verse 15. we read in the Hebrew and Vulgar, 98 years, whereas in the Syriack there is only 78 years. In the same Book, Chap. 6. Verse 15. the Septuagint and Vulgar make mention of *Fifty thousand and seventy years*, according to the Hebrew Text, and the Syriack Text speaks only of 5070. But let us pass by these sort of various Readings, which are so usual in all the Books of the Scripture, that there is no reason for us to stay any longer hereupon. I pass by also some Additions and Changes which are in the Syriack Translation, examples of which may be seen in the Book of *Joshua*, where the division of the Lands and Possessions

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ons which the *Israelites* made amongst themselves, after they came into the promis'd Land, is spoken of.

I find a more considerable Alteration in the Book of the *Psalms*, whence the *Syrians* have took away the Titles which in the Hebrew Text are before most of the *Psalms*, and they have put others instead of those they have taken away. It is true, that these Titles or Inscriptions do not appear to be made by the Authors of the *Psalms*, but rather by those who made the collection thereof; however private persons ought not to take them away, and put others in their stead. I approve not even of the Septuagints changing some of them, which for certain is less excusable in the *Syrians*, who might indeed add new Titles to the *Psalms* by way of Explanation, and set down in short the sense of each Psalm; but the ancient Titles ought to have been kept as they were in the Original Hebrew. This alteration amongst the *Syrians* proceeds from the Contents of most of the Books of the Scripture, being heretofore set down at the beginning of each Book; and this was more particularly observ'd in the *Psalms* which every one read. Wherefore the *Syrians*, who explain'd the *Psalms* differently from the *Jews*, who heeded too much the literal sense, put before every Psalm the Contents of their Exposition. For example, where we read with the *Jews* in the Title of the 3d. Psalm, *Psalm of David, when he fled from his Son Absalom*, it is in the Syriack, *Psalm of David, concerning future Bliss*. And it is the same with the other *Psalms*, even with those which have no Inscription or Title in the Hebrew. Thus Psalm 1st. has this Title in the Syriack Translation, *Discourse concerning the way of well living, according to the Rule of the nine Happinesses spoken of by St. Matthew*. And Psalm 2d. is entitled, *Concerning the Call of the Gentiles. Prophecie of the Passion of the Messiah*.

In a word, The *Syrians* having appli'd the *Psalms* to our Saviour and his Church, they have plac'd in short before each Psalm, the Contents of these Explanations of theirs; and it is this which we in comparing the *Massoret* of the *Jews* with that which the *Christians* heretofore made use of, call'd *Κεφαλαί, Chapters*. Besides, at the end of each Psalm the *Syrians* have counted the Verses, which the *Greeks* call, *στίχες*. But we are to take care of confounding these sort of Verses, which we have largely treated of in the first Book, with the Verses of the *Massorets*, and those which are at present mark'd in all Bibles. It would have been well, if these Verses which oftentimes breaks off the sense where it is not compleat, had neither been mark'd in the Syriack, nor any other Translation.

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To proceed, It was necessary for us to make this Observation of the Verses in the Syriack Translation, that we may not be surpriz'd, when we find the number of Verses mention'd at the beginning of each Psalm, agrees not with the Verses as they are at present mark'd. For example, The *Syrians* reckon 14 Verses in the first Psalm, where we reckon but 7. They make 28 in the second, where we count but 13. They in Psalm 3. count 17 Verses, where we reckon but 8. and so of the rest; so that they count as many more Verses as we at present do. These same Verses are set down at the end of most of the other Books, with the Sections and Chapters, as we have already largely explain'd, and therefore we need dwell no longer hereupon. We may only observe, that the Syriack Translation is more exact in some places in the *English Polyglotte*, than in the *French* one; besides, that in the last Volume of the *English Polyglotte*, the various Readings of the several Syriack Copies of the Bible, and some other Critical Observations, are inserted. But for all that, there are many faults in this last Edition of the Syriack Translation yet left, which might easily have been corrected.

To speak in general, there is much confusion in the Syriack Copies of the Bible, which are less exact than the *Jewish Hebrew* Text, or the *Septuagint* Translation. *Masius* would have done well to have publish'd as much of the holy Scriptures as he had translated, from the Greek *Septuagint* into Syriack, from the *Hexaplast* of *Origen*. This ancient Syriack Translation would be of great use for the restoring of the Greek *Septuagint* Text, whereas that printed in the *French* and *English Polyglottes*, being made from the Hebrew, is of no great use, because it has not only been alter'd by Transcribers, but it has in many places been fitted to the *Septuagint*, or rather to the Arabick and Syrian Translations made from the *Septuagint*. If the Greek Translation of *St. Ephrem's* Works, which *Gerard Vossius*, Dean of *Tongres*, has translated out of Greek into Latin, be true, we cannot doubt but the *Syrians* at that time made use of the *Septuagint* translated into their Tongue.

As for the Syriack Tongue, in which the Syriack Translations of the Bible were writ, without doubt it is very ancient, and if we will believe the *Syrians*, it is the first Tongue of the World. However it is, this at least is certain, that the ancient *Chaldee*, which was *Abraham's* and the other *Chaldeeans* of that time's Mother-Tongue, may be also call'd *Syrian*; wherefore it is unnecessary to enquire too curiously, whether these two Tongues differ one from another. Thus we see at this

*Masius.*

*Gerard Vossius.*

this day, that the *Syrians* call their Tongue indifferently either *Chaldee* or *Syriack*. There is however some difference betwixt the *Syriack* spoke at *Jerusalem* in our Saviour's time, and the present *Syriack* which was spoke in *Syria*, till *Omar* the third *Caliphe* made himself *Omar*. Master thereof. And besides, this last *Syrian* Tongue may be divided into several Dialects, by reason both of the pronounciation, and certain particular expressions. The *Nestorians* for example who dwell in *Babylon*, and they who are scatter'd about in the *Indies*, have their Books more elegantly writ than the *Jacobites* and *Marionites*, whose Books have not so much elegancy of style. As *Babylon* was the Seat of the Empire, it is probable that they who liv'd in that Countrey, preserv'd the ancient Tongue better than they who dwelt farther off; and as the *Nestorians* of the *Indies*, who are usually call'd *Christians of St. Thomas*, are under a Patriarch who resides at *Mosul*, and who calls himself the *Patriarch of Babylon*, they have taken from this place all their Books writ in the *Babylonian* Language. On the contrary, the *Jacobites* and *Marionites*, who were under the Patriarch of *Antioch*, and who have at present Patriarchs who take this Title, although they dwell not at *Antioch*, have also their Books writ in the *Syrian* Tongue, as it was spoke at *Antioch*.

We may moreover observe, That the great union betwixt the Greek and Syrian Churches, occasion'd many Greek words to creep into the Syrian Tongue; and the *Syrians*, as well *Nestorians* as *Jacobites* and *Marionites*, having translated most of the Greek Fathers, and other Ecclesiastical Authors into their Tongue, have contributed much to this mixture of Tongues: Besides, Greek being the most universal Tongue throughout the East, and in which the first Ecclesiastical Constitutions were writ, the Bishops of those places where the Syriack Tongue was spoke, were in a manner oblig'd to learn Greek, to the end they might read the ancient Fathers Books, and the Canons of the Church, in their Originals. In a word, *St. Ephrem*, who writ his Works in Syriack, which have since been translated into Greek, seems to have understood Greek, because he sometimes quotes the Greek Fathers, and especially *Irenaeus*. But whether it be that the *Syrians* read these ancient Fathers Books in Greek, or that they were translated into Syriack, no one can doubt but that the *Syrians* have borrow'd most of their Religion from the *Greeks*; and it is to this that I ascribe this mixture of Greek words, which has for a long time been in the *Syriack* and *Chaldee*, whereof there are some in the Syriack Translations of the Bible.

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I shall not treat here of the *Chaldee* or *Syriack* Dialect, which has been a long time us'd by the *Jews*, because I shall speak more particularly hereupon, in examining the *Chaldee* Paraphrases, which the *Jews* call *Targum*. I shall only add to what has already been observ'd concerning the *Syriack* Dialects, that the Characters of this Tongue differ not much from the ancient *Chaldee* Letters, which the *Jews* brought from *Babylon*, and which they yet make use of in their Hebrew Copies of the Bible. There has hapned no other alteration unto them, than what usually does in all Languages, for the more convenient writing of them. The *Syriack* Copies of the Bible which are in the *French* and *English Polyglottes*, are writ in *Jacobite* or *Marionite* Characters, which differ as little as can be from the *Babylonian* or *Nestorian* Characters.

As for the Vowels which have been added to this Tongue, we may observe, that the *Syriack* in this wholly agrees with the Hebrew; and therefore we ought to apply what we have already said of the Points invented by the *Massoret Jews*, to the Points which the *Grammarians* or *Syrian* Criticks have likewise invented, for the limiting of the reading of their Tongue. Their ancient Vowels, *A*, *I*, and *U*, or as they call them, *Olaph*, *Jud* and *Vau*, not being sufficient to determine how every word ought to be read, they have invented Points in imitation of the *Jews* to fix the Reading; and therefore the manner of reading the *Syriack*, is not more infallible than the *Massoret*. The most reasonable thing methinks we can say hereupon is, that this pointing has not wholly depended upon the fancy of particular persons, but has been set down according to the commonly receiv'd custom.

We are not to imagine, that they who first caus'd the *Syrian* Translations to be printed in *Europe*, which we at present have, added all the Points as we now find them. They only put some which were wanting in the Manuscript Copies which they made use of: And that we may more thoroughly understand this new way of Pointing, we are to observe, that the *Syrians* when they add any Points in their Manuscripts, they only put what they think are necessary for the determining of the sence; so that there are not Points over every Letter, as there ought to be, for the right pronunciation of the whole words; wherefore it was necessary to supply the other Points which were wanting, according to the Rules of Grammar, which has not been always infallibly done. It would perhaps have been better to have printed the Manuscripts Copies, with those Points only which were there-

therein, than to have added others which were suppos'd to be wanting. Every one might have suppli'd this defect as well as he could, whereas this liberty seems to be taken away, in the Copies where all the Points are set down. *Widmanstadius*, who first publish'd a Copy of the New Testament in *Syriack*, did well in printing it with those Points only which were in his Manuscript Copy, because the others might easily be suppli'd; and that usually the wanting of these last Points, hinders the sence from being equivocal. To conclude, They are not wholly to be excus'd, who have added the other Points to the *Syriack* Copies, both of the New and Old Testament; but these faults are not considerable, and they seldom change the sence, because they usually consist but in niceties of Grammar, which may be laid aside.

There were however great Disputes upon this Subject, amongst those who printed the *French Polyglotte*; but we may easily judge how idle their Disputes were by the Books which they writ, concerning some *Syriack* words which were pretended not to be rightly pointed. I dare affirm that he who occasion'd this Dispute, understood not *Syriack*. But let us leave these trifles, which are fit to be touch'd upon in general, that we may not rely wholly upon the pointing of the printed *Syriack* Copies, especially if we find that by changing the pointing, and observing still the Rules of Grammar, we can make a better sence.

Lastly, When we find so little uniformity in the *Syriack* Translation of the Old Testament, we ought to blame the *Syrians*, who have taken the liberty of reviewing their Copies according to their own fancies, and of preferring in some places the sence of their own Translations made from the *Septuagint*: So that they have very improperly made a mixture of Translations; although the *Latins* have chang'd several things in some of the *Nestrians* and *Marionites* Ecclesiastical Books, we find not however that they have corrected their *Syriack* Copies of the Bible. For example, The *Marionites Chaldee Missal* printed at *Rome*, has been thus corrected; and we moreover know, that the *Marionites* of *Mount Liban*, have also corrected several other Books by the Pope's Order; but we find not that there has been any such Order given, for the correcting of their Translation of the Bible. The *Nestorian Chaldeans*, who were re-united at least in outward show to the Church of *Rome*, through the pressure of their affairs, dissembled for some time part of their belief, to make their re-union more ealie; and they sometimes left out of their Books the

Name of *Theodoret* and *Nestorius*, and some other things which were contrary to the opinion of the Church, but they never medled with the Books of the Bible, which they have always left untouch'd.

Alex. Menes. Hist. of the East, his progress in the reducing of the Christians of St. Thomas.

Although the Pope's Missionaries did all they could to reform the *Nestorians* Faith, which are call'd *Christians of St. Thomas*, and corrected improperly enough some of their *Syriack* Books, they however never corrected their Translations of the Bible. *Alexis Meneses*, of the Order of *St. Augustine*, who was made Archbishop of *Goa*, and who took the Title of *Primate* of the East, did indeed all he could to reduce these Christians to the Church of *Rome*. He introduc'd many things anew into their Ceremonies; he alter'd their *Missals*, and other Service-Books; but we find not that he undertook the correcting of their Bibles. Although *Meneses*, or the other Missionaries, (who sometimes have stretch'd their power too far in those Countreys) should in their Synods have order'd the *Syriack* Translations of the Bible, us'd by the *Christians of St. Thomas*, to have been corrected, their Orders concerning the Scriptures would have signifi'd nothing, since they have at present several *Syriack* or *Chaldee* Books uncorrected, which the Missionaries of those Countreys had reform'd. As they have no Printing amongst them, there can be no great number of corrected Copies made, which in series of time will be neglected, and when they want new Copies, they go to the true Copies which were never corrected.

Thus it is impossible to alter the Books of these *Christians of the Levant*, until their re-union comes to be of an ancient date; and even then it would be very hard, without suppressing all their Manuscripts, and printing of those same Books with all the alterations that ought to be, as has already been done to the *Syriack Office* of the *Marionites*, whereof no Manuscript Copies are to be found, since the printing of their Ecclesiastical Books at *Rome*. But this has not been done to the Translations of the Bible, which the *Latins* have not medled with; and although some of the *Jacobites* are re-united to the Church of *Rome*, they have yet all the same *Syriack* Copies of the Bible, because their Books has only been corrected in things relating to Faith, and some particular Ceremonies. To conclude, Were it not that I should be tedious by too long a digression, I would show, that the Reformation made by the Missionaries of *Rome*, in the Faith and Ceremonies of these People, have most of them been made without judgement, because they have neither known nor throughly examin'd their Faith. But I have already spoke enough concerning the *Syriack* Translations of

of the Scripture; let us now pass to the *Arabians*, *Cophites*, *Aethiopi-ans*, *Arminians*, and other People separated from the Church of *Rome*.

## CHAP. XVI.

The Arabick Translations of the Scripture. When and upon what occasion they were made. The Translations now us'd by the *Cophites*, *Aethiopi-ans*, *Arminians*, and several other People; with several Reflections upon the Tongues of these different Nations.

There are two sorts of Arabick Translations of the Scripture; the one made by the *Jews*, and the other by the *Christians*. We shall speak of the former hereafter, when we shall particularly examine the *Jewish* Translations. As for the others, there perhaps will be no great need of treating of them at large, since we ought to suppose that they have been made from the *Septuagint*; I mean those which some People of the *Levant* at present make use of; wherefore I reckon not amongst them the Arabick Translation of the *Pentateuch*, printed at *Rome* from the *Vulgar Latin* one: It had methinks been more proper to have printed the Arabick Translations of the Scripture us'd by the Eastern Church, than to give the other Churches a Translation, which had only been declar'd authentick for the Western. For as has already been observ'd, the Council of *Trent* pretended not by its Decree, to obstruct the ancient Translations of other Nations; and therefore we ought not to have impos'd this Law upon them, which can only alienate them from our belief. Let us now come to the Arabick Translations, which these People have made for their own private use.

The Arabick Translations in general are of no great Authority, because they are not ancient, and that most of them have been very negligently made from the *Syriack* Translations. All the Arabick Translations of the Bible which we have at present, were made no longer than since the *Saracens* made themselves Masters of many Provinces, which afterward spoke Arabick: Before that time, the *Syrians*, whether *Jacobites*, *Marionites*, or *Nestorians*, read the holy Scriptures only in the

Arabick: Translat.

the Syriack Tongue, which we before spoke of. The *Christians* of *Egypt* or *Coptys* had also Translations of the Bible writ in the *Coptick* Language, and all these People preserve to this day these ancient Translations, which are only understood by learned men. As then the *Arabick* Tongue had spread it self through all these Nations, and that there were few persons who understood those former Tongues, 'twas necessary there should be new Translations of the Bible made, as also of most part of the Offices of the Church in the Vulgar Tongue, from their ancient Translations. The *Syrians* then translated their Syriack Translations into Arabick; and because they have two sorts of Translations, one made from the Hebrew, and the other from the Greek Septuagint, we find also two Arabick Translations; wherefore we find at the end of some Books of the Bible translated into Arabick, that they have been translated from the Hebrew, that is to say, from the ancient Syriack Translation made from the Hebrew. The other Arabick Translation amongst the *Syrians*, which is called the Septuagint, was also thus taken from the ancient Syriack Translation made from the Septuagint. And besides, as the *Syrians* had translated the Greek Septuagint in the *Hexaplas* of *Origen*s, with the *Altericks*, little Lines, and other Marks, which we before spoke of, into their Tongue, these same *Hexaplasses* have been translated out of Syriack into Arabick. Some persons however may have made Arabick Translations from the Septuagint, especially they who are of the Sect of the *Melchites*, who have translated into Arabick most of the Books of the Office used by the *Greeks*. But the Arabick Tongue not spreading it self in the *Levant*, till after all these Sects, who had already translated the Scripture into their Tongue, it is much more probable, that most of these Translations were not immediately made from the Septuagint, but from other Translations, which had before been made by the Septuagint.

This being granted, it is easie to be proved, that most of the Arabick Translations of the Bible can be of no great use, since we have the Hebrew Text, the Greek Septuagint, and the ancient Syriack and Coptick Translations. Besides, that the *Arabians* have took a great deal of liberty in translating, and that the Transcribers have not been exact in writing out of their Copies, and that they have very often unskillfully mixed two Syriack Translations together; so that there are many things in the Arabick Translations, which are supposed to be made from the Hebrew, which belong to the Greek Septuagint, and consequently could not have been taken from the He-

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Hebrew. We find many of these faults in the Arabick Translation of the Book of *Joshua*, in the *English* and *French Polyglotts*, and yet we nevertheless read in the end of this Book, that it was translated out of Hebrew into Arabick. And to make a better judgement hereof, we shall give a few Examples of the Irregularity of this Translation.

There are for the most part the same faults as there are in the Syriack Translation whence it was taken; and over and above the Transcribers have made others, and they have in some places followed the Greek Septuagint, or rather the Syriack Translation of *Joshua* made from the Septuagint; and lastly, the Interpreter is very often more a Paraphraiser than a Translator. In Chap. 1. v. 2. where we read in *Josh. 1. 2.* the Hebrew, as also in the Syriack Translation, [*The Land which I give to the Children of Israel.*] the Arabick has translated, [*The Land which I have promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*] In Verse 3. of the same Chapter the sense is wholly altered, by reason the Interpreter has joyn'd the word *Wilderness* with the foregoing words, whereas he ought to have joyn'd it with the following; wherefore he has translated, [*As I have said unto Moses in the Wilderness*] but according to the present Hebrew Text, as also according to all the ancient Translations, the sense ends at these words, [*As I said unto Moses.*] Then follows, [*From the Wilderness and this Libanon.*] *Ibid. 3.*

In the 2d. Chapter of the same Book and 1st. Verse, where we read in the Hebrew as also in all the ancient Translations [*of Shittim*] which is the name of a Place, the Arabick Translation has, *Menak Aaphorim*, and the Latin, *Ex Infidelibus*, as if *Joshua* had sent two Infidels for Spies. But the Latin Interpreter of the Arabick Translation mistakes in this place, as also in many others, where he has not rightly understood the sense of his Author. It is plain that a Place is spoke of here, and there is nothing more ridiculous, than the Latin Interpreters Translation of the 1st. Verse of the 3d. Chapter, where he has translated the same Arabick words, *Profectusq; est ex Infidelibus*, as if *Infideles* was the name of a Place, or the Explanation of a Place there spoke of. The too great liberty which the Arabick Translator has taken, of changing one Name into another, has occasioned these sorts of Errors in the Latin Translation from the Arabick; wherefore in this place the Arabick word signifies a *Village*, as the Hebrew word *Capbar*, and not *Infidel*. *Josh. 3. 1.*

In Chap. 3. Verse 16. where the Hebrew has, [*Very far from the City Adam*] we read in the Arabick Translation, [*Very far from them*] which *Josh. 3. 16.*



which ought to be attributed to the *Arabian* Transcribers, because the *Syriack* agrees with the *Hebrew*, only there is *Orom* instead of *Adam*, and the *Latin* Interpreter of the *Syriack* Translation has translated *Aram*.

Josh. 5.9. In Chap. 5. Verse 9. the *Arabick* Interpreter has translated, *Uncircumcised*, whereas the *Hebrew* Text has, *Gilgal*, as also the *Syriack* Translation made from that Text. It is probable that the *Arabick* has herein followed some *Syriack* Copy, which agreed with the *Greek* Septuagint, although the present *Greek* Copies agree with the *Hebrew*.

Ibid. 12. In the same Chapter, Verse 12. the *Arabick* has *Damascus*, instead of *Canaan*, which is both in the *Hebrew* and *Syriack*; but we shall find many Examples of these sorts of alterations in the *Arabick* Translation.

Josh. 6.25. In Chap. 6. Verse 25. we read in the *Arabick* Translation, [*Thus did Adam who was in the House of Israel*] which is neither in the *Hebrew* nor in the *Syriack*, but only in the *Septuagint*, and that too with some alteration; for they have translated, *Thus did Ozan who was of Bethel*.

In a word, The whole *Arabick* Translation is very incorrect; and although it is said in the end of this Book, that it was translated from the *Hebrew*, it deviates very often from thence. We find most of the faults which are in the *Syriack*, with many others, which partly proceed from the *Arabick* Interpreter, and partly from Transcribers.

Josh. 11.1. For example, In the 11th. Chapter of this Book, where both the *Hebrew* and ancient Translations have, *Jabin King of Hazor*, we read in the *Arabick*, *Nabin King of Casarea*, as if *Hazor* was *Casarea*.

Ibid. 10. And besides, in Verse 10. of the same Chapter, it is writ, that *Joshua took the Town of Casarea, and that Casarea heretofore was the capital City of all those Kingdoms*.

There are many other such faults in the *Arabick* Translation, which the *Latin* Interpreter might easily have corrected, had he consulted the original Text and the ancient Translation; but instead of correcting the faults of this Translation, he makes yet more, where the *Arabick* words are equivocal: As in Chap. 8. of this same Book, Verse 32. instead of translating according to the *Hebrew*, *A Copy*, or *another Copy of the Law*, he has translated, *The last Copy*, because the *Arabick* word signifies both; he ought to have consulted the sense, and not the Grammar only. This fault is usually found in all the *Latin* Translations, from the *Arabick* and *Syriack* Translations, which are in the *English* and *French Polyglotts*. I

I shall not spend time here in observing, how this *Arabick* Translation differs from the other Translations, and the *Hebrew* Text in calculation, because there is nothing more common than these sorts of Differences; it however usually agrees with the *Syriack* Translation, although in some places it agrees neither with the *Syriack*, *Hebrew*, or the *Septuagint*. For example, In Chap. 2. of *Judges*, Judg. 2. 8. Verse 8. the *Arabick* Translation has it, that *Joshua died at 120 years of age*, and yet we read in the *Hebrew* Text, as also in the ancient Translations but an 110. In Chapter 16. of the same Book, Judg. 16. 5. Verse 5. we read in the *Arabick*, as also in the *Syriack*, *1300 pieces of Silver*, whereas in the *Hebrew*, *Vulgar*, and *Septuagint*, there are only *1100 pieces of Silver*. In Chapter the 4th. Verse 15. of the first Book of *Samuel*, the *Arabick* and *Syriack* have it, that *Eli was only 78 years of age*, but we read in the *Hebrew*, *Septuagint*, and *Vulgar*, *98 years*. Besides, in Chapter 6. of the same Book, Verse 19. where we read in the *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Vulgar Latin*, *50070*. we read in the *Arabick* and *Syriack*, *5070*. It is unnecessary to run over all the other various Readings concerning the Calculation, because they are too frequent.

The proper Names are also ill translated in the *Arabick* Translation, which ought partly to be attributed to the *Arabick* Translator, and partly to the Transcriber. For example, What can be more ridiculous than the *Arabick* Translation of the *Hebrew* word, *Pesilim*, in Chap. 3. *Jud.* Verse 19. The *Septuagint* and *Vulgar* Translation has, *Idols*; but the *Syriack* Interpreter has kept the *Hebrew* word, *Pesilim* in his Translation; and the *Arabick* has *Palestine*, as if *Pesilim* which signifies *Idols*, could signify *Palestine*. In Chap. 2. of the same Book, Verse 16. where we read in the *Hebrew* and ancient Translations, *The City of Palm-trees*, the *Arabick* has, *The City of Moser*. But as these faults are very frequent, it is enough for us to have spoke of them in general, and to have given some Examples.

The *Arabian* Interpreter has took more liberty in translating of the proper Names in the *Chronicles*, than in any other place; for we find there the Names of *Turky*, *Greece*, *Corasan*, *Sclavonia*, *France*, *Tarsus*, *Cyprus*, and several others such like. Besides, the *Arabick* Translator sometimes changes the *Hebrew* Names into *Arabick* ones, which signify the same thing: For example, He calls *Phaleg*, *Casem*, because *Casem* in *Arabick* signifies the same as *Phaleg* in *Hebrew*. Whence we may in a manner justify their opinion who affirm, that *Hebrew* was not the first Tongue of the World, and that the Names of *Adam*,  
P Eve,

*Eve*, and some others which are in *Genesis*, were chang'd by him who writ or collected the Acts of the *Pentateuch*.

Job 4. 2. Lastly, If we have a mind to know more throughly how negligent the *Arabick* Translator has been, we need only read the other Books of the Scripture, which are more obscure than those we have already given Examples of. We shall find the sense to differ much more, both from the Original Hebrew and the ancient Translations: For example, In Chap. 4. *Job*, Verse 2. the *Arabick* Translator has attributed that to *Eliphaz*, which ought to be appli'd to *Job*, by changing of the second Person into the first.

We are however to observe, that the faults in the *Arabick* Translation proceed not only from the Interpreters and Transcribers, but also from the Grammarians, who have added Points to the *Arabick* Text, to make the Reading more easie. We may then apply to the *Arabick*, the same Rules we have laid down in speaking of the Hebrew and Syriack Tongues; and we may also change the pointing of the *Arabick* Text, when this alteration makes a better sense, especially if it be back'd by the Authority of the Hebrew Text, or some ancient Translation.

To proceed, Although the *Arabick* Translations seem to be of no great use, considering how lately they were writ, and how negligent the *Arabick* Translators were, we may however make great advantage of the Tongue in which they are writ, because it is the most copious of any of the Eastern Languages, and one may there find the roots, (to speak like a Grammarian) of many Hebrew words, which are hard to be found elsewhere. It is true, that it is not so nigh the Hebrew as either the Chaldee or Syriack, yet we may however find something of the Hebrew in the *Arabick*. And as this last Tongue has always been preserv'd, we may thence learn the proper signification of several Hebrew words, as also of some expressions, better than in the *Rabbins* Books, who sometimes make use thereof. Besides, the *Jews*, as we have already in the first Part of this Book observ'd, borrow'd the Art of Grammar from the *Arabians*, adding thereto only some superfluous Subtilties of their own.

As for the *Christians* of *Egypt* commonly call'd *Cophites*, I am of opinion, it would be more advantageous to consult carefully their ancient Translations of the Bible into the *Coptick* Tongue, than the *Arabick* ones, which we just now spoke of, and which those People, whether *Jacobites* or *Melchites*, at present make use of. It is very probable, that the *Coptick* Translations were made from the Greek

Se-

Septuagint, which was heretofore read throughout *Egypt*, which those People without doubt translated into their own Language. <sup>Father Kircher.</sup> Father Kircher, who has seen some Manuscript Copies of the Bible in *Coptick*, is of opinion, that the *Cophites* began to translate the Scripture about the same time as was held the Council of *Nice*; but let their Translations be of what age they will, this is certain, they are ancients than the *Arabick* ones, which were not made, as we have already observ'd, till after the Conquest of the *Arabians*, who brought their own Language into those Countreys.

The Name of *Cophite* or *Copte* comes from a City of the same Name, which was heretofore the Metropolis of *Thebaides*, mention'd by *Strabo* and *Plutarch*. The *Coptick* Language which they heretofore spoke, and into which they have translated the Bible, and several other Books, is certainly the ancient *Egyptian* Language, with some mixture of the Greek. The *Grecians* making themselves Masters of *Egypt*, made so great an alteration in the Language of that Countrey, that what we at present have of the *Coptick* Language, is full of Greek words, and it has no other Characters but the Greek a little alter'd. As this Tongue was understood but by few, it was necessary that what Books they had, and which they us'd in Divine Worship, should be translated into *Arabick*; and this was the Reason why they translated the Bible and their Liturgies into *Arabick*; besides, for the better preserving of the *Coptick* Tongue, they writ *Coptick* Grammars and Dictionaries. In a word, This Tongue is only understood by the Learned amongst them, as amongst the *Syrians* there are only a few learned men who understand Syriack.

Every one knows that the *Cophites* chief Religion is that of the *Monophysites*, or *Jacobites*, and that they are at present of that Sect, although they have often outwardly been united to the Church of *Rome*, to whom they have sometimes had recourse for the getting of money, by reason of the Missionaries which have been sent amongst them. Upon these occasions they scruple not to submit to the Pope, and to pretend to embrace his Religion; but for all that they never alter'd their Books, especially their Translations of the Bible, into *Coptick*.

After having spoke of the *Coptick* Translations of the Scripture, we need not enlarge upon the *Aethiopian* and *Abyssins* Translations, who <sup>Aethiopian</sup> are under the same Patriarch as the *Cophites*, who resides at *Grand Cairo*, and who takes the Title of Patriarch of *Alexandria*, the ancient Seat of his residence. As then the *Aethiopian* took most of their

Books and Ceremonies from the *Coptick* Church, to which they submitted themselves, it is probable that they took also from them their Translations of the Scripture. The Tongue they are writ in is call'd the *Ethiopian*, which is certainly the ancient *Ethiopian*, having something of the Hebrew, as also some Chaldee and Arabick words mix'd with it; so that these three Tongues make most of the *Ethiopian* Language, in which the holy Scriptures of this Nation are writ. The Language the *Ethiopians* speak at present, agrees not with the old *Ethiopian* Tongue, in which their Translations of the Bible, their Liturgies, and other Ecclesiastical Books are writ. They also call their Tongue *Chaldee*, as if it was the ancient *Babylonian Chaldee*, from which it however differs, although there are many *Chaldee* words in it. They have besides a particular Character, and they make no Points instead of Vowels under their Letters, as the *Hebrews*, *Arabians*, *Chaldeans*, and *Syrians* do, but each Letter makes a Syllable, being made both of a Vowel and Consonant.

The *Psalms* and *Canticles* in this Tongue agree with the Septuagint, and not with the Hebrew Text. They are of the same Faith as the *Coptes*, and they have but one Bishop, which is sent them by the Patriarch of the *Coptes*. It is true, they heretofore came to *Rome* to desire a Patriarch; but what befel *John Bermudes*, who was made Patriarch of all *Ethiopia*, and consecrated at *Rome* at the *Ethiopians* request, who pretended that for the future they would have no Bishops but what should come from *Rome*, plainly shows us, that all their Re-unions to the Church of *Rome* were only counterfeit, and lasted no longer than till they thought they had settled their Affairs.

If it be true that the *Christians* of *Persia* had heretofore the whole Scripture translated into their Tongue, as some Fathers seem to affirm, there is nothing of this ancient Translation left, which without doubt was made from the Septuagint. The *Persian* Tongue has been much alter'd since that time, chiefly by reason of the mixture of Arabick, which it is partly at present compos'd of; having lost its ancient Characters, it uses at present none but the Arabian, which it has fitted to its own way of pronunciation. This is however certain, that the *Persians* had heretofore Characters of their own, whereof we find some in ancient Medals. As for the Translations of some parts of the Bible into this Tongue, which we have at present, they can be of no great use, since they were but lately made.

The *Armenians* have some Translations of the whole Scripture into their Tongue pretty ancient, which were made by some of their

John Bermudes.

Persians.

Armenians.

Do-

Doctors who had learn'd Greek, and amongst others by *Moses* the Grammarian, and *David* the Philosopher, who liv'd near *St. Chryso-stom's* time, whom many Doctors believe to be the Author of the *Armenian* Characters. But the *Armenians* make a holy Hermit call'd *Mefrop*, to be the Author of them, who invented them at a Town call'd *Bala* near *Euphrates*, and who liv'd in *St. Chryso-stom's* time, whose Works the *Armenians* have, translated into their Tongue. As it was hard to get any whole Bibles writ in *Armenian*, by reason of the great charge thereof, *James Charactri* the *Armenian* Patriarch in the year 1662. commission'd *Uscan* Bishop of *Tuschuavanob*, to see some *Armenian* Bibles printed in *Europe*. Wherefore this *Armenian* Bishop being by Order of his Patriarch come to *Rome*, and having liv'd there about 15 months, he went in the year 1664. from thence to *Amsterdam*, where he printed at his own cost an *Armenian* Bible in 4<sup>to</sup>, and the New Testament in 8<sup>o</sup>, and several other *Armenian* Books. This Bishop afterwards came into *France*, and printed several other *Armenian* Books at *Marseills* with the King's leave; so that the Copies of the Bible which heretofore were very scarce amongst the *Armenians*, are now pretty common.

We might by this means easily correct both the Books and the Faith of the Eastern People, but it would be hard to introduce Printing amongst them, and I think there are only the *Greeks* and *Armenians* who make use thereof. The *Armenians* were drawn hereto by the advantage which they hop'd to make of their printed Books, which they have since, by reason of their Commerce, scatter'd throughout their whole Nation, which at present is not settled, but changes according to their Trade, especially since the Conquest of *Armenia* by *Schah Abus*, King of *Persia*. This Prince ruin'd many of their Churches, and those which are at present standing, are in a very ill condition; this was partly the reason why they fled to the Pope, and re-united themselves to the Church of *Rome*.

There were but some *Armenians* who were thus re-united to the Church of *Rome*, who alter'd some of their Books, the better to conform themselves to the *Romish* Faith; but they never made any alteration in their Bibles. Bishop *Uscan* caus'd them to be faithfully printed from good Manuscript Copies, unless he may have imitated the Tables in the Latin Bibles; at least he had a design so to do, and to print a Table of the things contain'd in the Bible, to supply in some sort the want of Concordances, which are only us'd by the Latin Church, whence the *Jews* at last have borrow'd them. To conclude,

The

Moses and David Armenian Doctors. Mefrop.

James Charactri. Uscan.

Schah Abus.

Uscan.

The same Bishop *Uscan* told me, that the *Armenian* Translation was made from the Septuagint by *Moses* and *David* before-mention'd.

There is yet something remaining of these ancient *Armenian* Churches, and the *Armenian* Patriarch resides at *Egmiasin*; although there are Schismaticks amongst them, and especially the Archbishop of *Aclamar*, in the Island of the great Lake of *Vassuracan*, who refuses to obey the Patriarch of *Egmiasin*, and he has took upon him the Title of *Patriarch* for above 500 years. He has 8 or 9 Bishopricks under him, but the *Turks* are continually ruining of his Churches. The Patriarch of *Egmiasin* has 17 or 18 Bishopricks under his Jurisdiction, and several Monasteries which acknowledge his Power.

I shall say nothing here of the *Armenians* Belief or Discipline, because every one knows that they have for a long time been of the Sect of the *Monophysites*, or *Jacobites*, whose opinions they very obstinately defend, although most of them understand them not, and their pretended Heresie consists only in imagination. They have always held great Disputes about Religion against the *Greeks*, who at this present despise them; in a word, they understand Traffick better than Divinity. The great charge which Bishop *Uscan* was at both in *Holland* and at *Marseills*, for the printing of their Bible, and several other Books, proceeded not so much out of charity, as out of hopes of selling them at good rates to those of his Nation: And this makes me believe he has made no alteration at all in them; whereas if they had been printed at *Rome*, and review'd by the Inquisitors, it is probable some things would have been alter'd.

At their Re-union to the Church of *Rome*, they produc'd a certain Act of Re-union to *Rome*, in the time of the Emperor *Constantine*, and *Tyridat* King of *Armenia*, under Pope *Sylvester*, and *Gregory* Patriarch of *Armenia*; but this Act and some others mention'd by *Galannus*, seems to be fictitious, and invented only for the making of their Re-unions more easie, especially that under Pope *Innocent* the III. The *Armenians* however believe it, to the end they may prove the Antiquity of their Patriarchs against the *Greeks*. There are many *Armenians* who to this day stand to these Re-unions, and are obedient to the holy See; and there are at present many *Latin Armenians*, who vigorously maintain the Interest of the Church of *Rome*, against the others whom they call *Schismaticks*. They are sometimes very much divided hereupon, because their Bishops often make their Religion to comply with their private Interest. But although this has occasion'd the altering of their *Missals*, and some other of their Books of Cere-

monies, we find not that they have ever corrected their Bibles, because they have not been review'd by the Inquisitors, although Bishop *Uscan*, who had the care of this Impression, and who was one of the Patriarchs of *Armenia's* Visitors, who resides at *Egmiasin*, acknowledg'd himself to be subject to the Pope.

Lastly, The *Moscovites*, the *Iberians* or *Georgians*, the People of *Colchida* or *Mengrelia*, being of the Greek Communion, have translated the Greek Bible into their Tongue; and the *Moscovites* have printed a Bible in their own Tongue, and in *Moscovite* Characters. But we have spoke enough of Translations of the Bible, made by People who differ both in Faith and Customs from the Church of *Rome*: Let us now pass to the *Jewish* Synagogues, who have also the Bible translated into several Languages.

## CHAP. XVII.

*Translations or Paraphrases upon the Scripture made by the Jews. Whether the Hellenist Jews ever read in their Synagogues any other than the Greek Septuagint Translation. Who these Hellenist Jews were, and how they made for their private use the Translation which has since been attributed to the Septuagint. Of the Samaritan Translation, and the Latin Translation thereof.*

THE Hebrew Tongue not being any more spoke by the *Jews* after their return from Captivity, their Doctors began to expound the Law to the People in a Tongue they understood; and they had continually Schools where they taught this Law. This by little and little occasion'd all these *Jewish* Translations or Paraphrases which we have at present. Now this custom of reading the holy Scripture, being observ'd by three different Sects, which are at present amongst the *Jews*, each Sect made its own Translation. The *Samaritans* have a Translation of the *Pentateuch* into the Samaritan Tongue, which comes nigh the *Babylonian* or ancient *Chaldee*, only the Orthography is not always exact, and it yet retains something of the Hebrew. They have also the *Pentateuch* translated for those who speak Arabick. The

*Caraites.* *Caraites* of *Constantinople* make use of a Translation of the *Pentateuch* into *Vulgar Greek*, which the other *Jews* who understand the *Vulgar Greek*, make use of also; and these latter *Jews* have took the pains to have it printed. The *Caraites* have besides some *Arabick* Translations, which they read where *Arabick* is spoke; and the other *Jews* have most of the Books of *Moses* translated into their *Vulgar Tongues*. These Translations are not usually writ in good Language, because the *Jews* have almost always endeavour'd to render the *Hebrew* words according to the rigor of the Letter; wherefore this Language may very well be call'd, as we have already observ'd, *The Language of the Synagogue*. We may however observe, that the *Jews* read in their *Synagogues* only the *Hebrew* Text, and no Translation at all; so that these Translations are only read in their Schools, where they teach the Scripture, and the Traditions of their Fathers. Thus when we say that the *Arabian Jews* read the Law of *Moses* in *Arabick*, the *Persian* in *Persian*, those of *Casa* in *Turkish*, we ought only thereby to understand the Expositions or Paraphrases which the Doctors make in the *Synagogues*, which serve instead of Schools, and not the true reading of the Law, because this last reading is alway to be in *Hebrew*.

*Jews Arabian, Persian and Turkish.*

*Hellenist Jews.*

We have reason to doubt, whether the *Hellenist Jews* heretofore read only in their *Synagogues* the *Septuagint* Translation, as is commonly believ'd. On the contrary, 'tis more probable that the *Hellenist*, who understood not *Hebrew*, read this *Greek* Translation only as an Exposition or Paraphrase; just as in the *Synagogues* of the *Jews* of *Babylon*, *Jerusalem*, and other Places where *Chaldee* was spoke, there was an Interpreter who made Paraphrases upon the *Hebrew* Text in *Chaldee*. Besides, the words *Synagogue* and *School*, may have been confounded, because the *Jews* usually take one for the other; and the *Synagogue* serves instead of a School, where they have no School apart joyn'd to their *Synagogue*. They call these Schools, *Bet Midras*, *House of Exposition*, because they therein explain the Law and their Traditions. It is then very probable, that the *Hellenist Jews* as well as the others, read the Law in *Hebrew* in their *Synagogues*, only with this difference, that they joyn'd the *Greek* Translation as a Paraphrase to the *Hebrew* Text. This plainly appears out of *Justinian's Constitutions*, where the *Septuagint* is said to be a Translation, which the *Hellenist* read with the *Hebrew* Text of the Law; besides, the *Greek* Translation has herein no advantage over any other, since the *Jews* are permitted to read the Bible in any other Tongue,

*Justin. Novel. Constit. 146.*

Tongue, as they shall think fit; and consequently, the Question was only concerning the Interpretation of the Law, which was to be joyn'd with the reading of the Original. I pass over the Decisions of the *Talmud*, which ordain'd that the Law should be publickly read in the *Synagogues* in *Hebrew* only, because it may be answer'd, that these Decisions bound only the other *Jews*, and not the *Hellenist*. To conclude, By the *Hellenist Jews* are meant all the *Jews* who spoke *Greek*, in what place soever they liv'd, even in the Territories of *Jerusalem* and *Babylon*. For although the Tongue which was usually spoke in the *Synagogues* of those Countreys was *Chaldee*, there were nevertheless other *Jews* who spoke *Greek*, and made as it were a *Greek* Colony. In this sence it is that there were *Synagogues* of *Hellenist Jews* in *Jerusalem*, who were scatter'd into several places, as we at present find the *Spanish Jews* in the *Levant*, and of late in *Holland*, who still preserve amongst them the *Spanish* Tongue, and a Translation of the Law in *Spanish*.

What is yet worthy our observation concerning the *Hellenist Jews*, who read the Bible in *Greek*, as a Translation or Paraphrase upon the *Hebrew* Text is, that as they endeavour'd to paraphrase the holy Scriptures, and not to translate them according to the rigor of the Letter, they took the liberty of changing and adding several things to make the sence more compleat. And we ought hereto partly to ascribe the great difference betwixt the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Copies; so that *Philon* & the other ancient Authors, who have affirm'd that the *Septuagint* Translation answer'd exactly to the *Hebrew* Text, never compar'd the two Copies together. All this prejudice is grounded only upon the suppos'd History of *Aristeus*, and proceeds from our not having seriously enough consider'd whence came the Translations or Paraphrases upon the Scripture amongst the *Jews*. But as we have already largely treated hereupon, and examin'd according to the Rules of Criticism, the *Septuagint* Translation, let us now come to the other Translations of the Bible made by the *Jews*.

There is printed in the *English* and *French Polyglotts*, that which we call the *Samaritan* Translation; but we ought to take care of confounding this Translation, as some Authors have done, with the *Hebrew Samaritan* Text; which is also printed in the same Bibles in *Samaritan* Characters. It is probable that the *Samaritan* Translation which we here speak of, was made by the *Samaritan* Doctors interpreting of the Law according to custom in the *Synagogues*, into the Tongue the People then spoke. This Translation is very literal, and

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seldom deviates from the Hebrew Text, unless in some places where it qualifies it, because it is very hard for an Interpreter not sometimes to limit the sense of his Text; and this we ought chiefly to take notice of, in the reading of this Samaritan Translation. Besides, we are sufficiently convinc'd, that it was made from the Hebrew Samaritan Text, with which it usually agrees, when it differs from the Hebrew Jewish Text; although it is very literal, yet it deviates sometimes, where the Translator gives his private opinion.

Gen. 1. 2. That we may the better judge of the Samaritan Translation, it is fit we should here produce some Examples thereof. In Chap. 1. Gen. Verse 2. where we read in the Vulgar, *Spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas*, the Samaritan Translator has limited the Hebrew Verb to a sense, which plainly denotes that a *Wind* is spoke of in that place, having translated *Flabat*, as *Onkelos* in his *Chaldaean Paraphrase* has also done; which sense is confirm'd by some Fathers.

Gen. 2. In Chap. 2. of the same Book, there are several proper Names, especially of Rivers, which the Samaritan Translator has took the liberty of changing into others, which he thought agreed better with those of his time; which method is very liable to mistakes.

Gen. 2. 10. In the same Chap. Verse 10. where we read in the Vulgar, agreeable to the Hebrew Text, *In quatuor Capita*, the Samaritan Interpreter has translated, *Nesolim*, and the Latin Translator, *In silis*; but this is an Error of the Transcriber, and we ought to read *Nozolim*, which signifies *Fluenta*, or *Streams of Water*.

Gen. 3. 5. In Chap. 3. Verse 5. where the Vulgar has according to the Original Hebrew, *Sicut Dei*, the Samaritan Interpreter has translated, *As Angels*; and he usually interprets the word *Elohim* thus. Wherefore

Gen. 5. 1. in Chap. 5. Verse 1. where the Vulgar and most of the other Translations have, *In the likeness of God*, he has translated, *In the likeness of*

Gen. 5. 24. *Angels*. In Chap. 5. Verse 24. where it is said, that *God took Enoch*, he has translated, *An Angel*, instead of *God*.

The Samaritan Translator deviates yet more from the literal sense in some other places; which proceeds either from his reading otherwise in the Hebrew Text, or from his not rightly understanding of the sense, and sometimes from his prejudices, which he could not shake off. Most of the Jewish Translations are herein faulty; and besides the Translators often take too much liberty, and neglect the Grammatical sense.

As for the Latin Translation from this Samaritan Translation, it is not in my opinion very exact, especially in those places where it dif-

differs from the Hebrew Samaritan Text; so that it had need be review'd, or a new one made. It is true, that *Castle's Observations* <sup>casti.</sup> upon this Translation in the 6th. Volume of the *English Polyglott*, may be of some use for the reforming of it; but they are not sufficient of themselves, besides that the Samaritan Translation is corrupted in several places, which ought to be restor'd before the correcting of the Latin Translation. Wherefore it would be proper to have several Copies, and to compare them together, for the correcting of the faults in the printed Copy.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*Of the Chaldaean Paraphrases. Neither the Authors nor the time when they were made, can certainly be known. How they are compos'd. Of the Chaldaean Tongue, and the style of these Paraphrases. Of the Reformation in the Chaldaean Pointing, and whether they are to be allow'd of or no. Whether it was well done to print these Paraphrases, which in many places seem to favour the Jewish Superstitions.*

WE have already observ'd, that the *Chaldaean* being grown the common Language of the *Jews*, the Doctors taught the People the Law of *Moses* in this Tongue; and this was the Reason why the Doctors Glosses have since been publish'd, which are call'd, *Paraphrases* or *Interpretations*. They are not however so ancient, because it was a long while before those ancient Doctors Expositions were reduc'd to a body of *Paraphrases*; but at first they joyn'd to the hardest words the Interpretations thereof, and when the Reader read one Verse in the Synagogue, the Doctor or rather Interpreter gave his Exposition upon it in *Chaldee*. This is the Reason why we at present find several Manuscript Copies of the Law, in this order with the *Chaldaean Paraphrase*, where after each Verse of the Text, the Paraphrase follows in another Verse; which certainly proceeds from the ancient way of reading in the Synagogues with the Hebrew Text the Exposition thereof.

Onkelos.  
Jonathan.

*Onkelos* is generally thought to be the Author of the Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch*, and *Jonathan* of that upon the Books which the *Jews* call *Prophetical*. But if we diligently examine how these Paraphrases have been collected, it will be hard to prove either the Authors, or the time when they were collected. Several have been of opinion, that they were at least as old as our Saviour, and others on the contrary have affirm'd, that they were but of a late date, and after *St Jerom*, because he makes no mention of them in his Works. They might however be in *St. Jerom's* time, and yet he make no mention of them, for as much as they were made particularly for the *Jews*, and perhaps they were not then reduc'd into a Body, as we at present find them. Some learned men have made *Jonathan* to be the Author of a Translation upon the *Pentateuch*; but the style of this last Paraphrase differs so much from that of the other upon the *Prophets*, which this *Jonathan* is suppos'd also to be the Author of, that any one, without he be wholly ignorant of the *Chaldean* Tongue, must necessarily see that these two Paraphrases could not be made by the same Interpreter. *Father Morin* however enlarges much hereupon, and gives many Examples to show, that the Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch* cannot be so ancient as this *Jonathan*, as if the most learned Criticks were not of his opinion, and had not distinguish'd betwixt these two Paraphrases, which are both suppos'd to be *Jonathan's*. They are almost all of opinion, that that upon the *Prophets* is really *Jonathan's*, whereas that upon the *Pentateuch* has been but lately known; and some have made it to be *Jonathan's*, because they knew not the Author of it, without having examin'd it.

Father  
Morin in  
Exercit.  
Bibl.

The proofs which are usually brought from some modern and barbarous words, as also of some Fables inserted into these Paraphrases, are not wholly convincing, because it may be said that these words were added in series of time, which thing usually happens to most Paraphrases; and the same may be said of the Fables, which seem not to be very ancient, because some *Jews* may have added them to the Glosses of their Fathers. We may however prove the antiquity of the two first Paraphrases by the pureness of their style, which is much neater than that of the *Ghemara* of the *Talmud*. It is probable then that they were writ, when the *Chaldee* had not so much degenerated, as it had when the *Ghemara* was compos'd; and it is also very probable that these Paraphrases were collected from ancient Glosses, to which some things have afterwards been added, as usually happens in these sort of Books.

The

The Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch*, which is suppos'd to be *Onkelos's*, is pretty exact, and word for word from the Hebrew, so that it may in a manner be call'd a Translation. The other Paraphrase upon the Books which the *Jews* call *Prophetical*, and which is suppos'd to be *Jonathan's*, enlarges more in some places; the style however is very excellent, and different from the style of those Doctors who made the *Ghemara*; but it is not without some Stories, and ridiculous Glosses.

We need not stay here to enquire after the time when, according to the *Jews*, *Onkelos* and *Jonathan* liv'd; for besides that we have reason to doubt, whether they were really the Authors of these Paraphrases, the *Jewish* Histories are very fabulous hereupon, and I wonder that there are any persons so foolish, as to give credit to the Dreams in the *Jewish* Books.

They read every *Saturday* a *Parascab*, or Chapter of *Onkelos's* Paraphrase, with a *Parascab* of the Hebrew Text of the Law; they also at the same time give the Exposition or Paraphrase thereof in their Mother-Tongue: They without doubt took this custom from the *Jews*, who dwelt at *Babylon* and *Jerusalem*, where they then spoke *Chaldee*. To conclude, There is nothing which has help'd more to preserve the Hebrew Tongue, than these Paraphrases or Glosses of the ancient Doctors; and this is the Reason why the most learned *Rabbins* have very often had recourse to them in their Commentaries upon the Scripture.

*Elias Levita*, who alone has endeavour'd more than all the other *Jews*, to make known the *Chaldean* Paraphrases, has spoke very largely hereupon in his Preface to his *Chaldee* Dictionary. Besides the Paraphrases we have under *Jonathan's* and *Onkelos's* Name, he sets down another which he calls, *The Paraphrase of Jerusalem*, to distinguish it from the two former; he observes that this last Paraphrase is writ in a barbarous style, and has many words borrow'd from other Languages, for example, from the Greek, Latin, and Persian. The *Talmud* of *Jerusalem* is writ in this barbarous Language of *Jerusalem*; and this is the Reason why a certain Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch* has been call'd *Targum*, or *Paraphrase of Jerusalem*, which differs much from that of *Onkelos*, which may be call'd the *Babylonian*, by reason of the neatness of its style, which comes nigh the *Chaldee* of the Book of *Daniel*.

This Paraphrase of *Jerusalem* does not seem to be so ancient as the *Talmud* of *Jerusalem*; for which Reason the style is more rude and

bar-

barbarous, and besides there are more Fables in it than in the Paraphrase of *Jonathan*.

The *Jews*, who will always pretend to understand every thing concerning their own Nation, are for all that ignorant of the Author of the Paraphrases upon the Books call'd, *Hagiographes*. It is probable that they were not collected by one and the same Author. *Elius Levita* affirms, that they were made by several persons. He distinguishes the *Targum* upon the Book of *Jab*, *Proverbs*, and the *Psalms*, from that upon the five Books; and we may say that there have been several *Targums* upon the *Hagiographes*, if we will believe the *Rabbins*, who give us an account of them.

All these Paraphrases except that of *Onkelos's* and *Jonathan's*, seem to be of no great use, and perhaps there was no great necessity of searching so diligently after them. *R. Menabem de Recanati*, in his Commentaries upon the Law, mentions a Paraphrase of *Jonathan's* upon the *Pentateuch*, which some other Authors have also spoke of; but we have none which we can certainly call his; he had without doubt read another Chaldee Paraphrase, which he without any reason thought was *Jonathan's*. We cannot however deny, but that the *Jews* have had several Paraphrases upon the Books of *Moses*; and it is probable enough that the *Jews* having preferr'd all the *Chaldaean* Paraphrases before that of *Onkelos*, the latter have remain'd in obscurity.

To proceed, The Copies of these Paraphrases, whether Manuscript or printed ones, differ much amongst themselves, especially in the Vowels and Pointings. There is indeed a Collection of these Variations, in the 6th. Volume of the *English Polyglott*; but there may be made a far greater Collection from several other Copies, which have not there been consulted. The Reason of these various Readings is, because that at first the Chaldee Text of the Paraphrases not being pointed, the *Jews* who afterwards added Points to make the Reading more easie, have put them in different places, accordingly as they understood Chaldee. Some *Christians* who understood Chaldee, have also took the liberty to correct in many places, the old pointing of the Chaldee of these Paraphrases, and have guided themselves herein, by the pointing of the Chaldee in the Books of *Daniel* and *Esdras*. We find some of these new Pointings in the Bible of *Alcala*, but more of them in the Bible of *Antwerp*. And lastly, *Buxtorf* the Father, who printed at *Basil* a Hebrew Bible with the *Chaldaean* Paraphrases, and the Commentary of some *Rabbins* upon the Scripture Text, has also

corrected the pointing of all these Paraphrases. But we may say, that this last correction of *Buxtorf's* is not so perfect, as he himself design'd it should be: If he had carefully enquir'd after the Manuscript Copies of the *Chaldaean* Paraphrases, he would have found several where the pointing is more correct, and where more of these superfluous Letters have been taken out, which serv'd instead of Vowels before Points were us'd in the Chaldee Text.

We may however observe, that this variety of pointing has occasion'd various interpretations, which has not been sufficiently consider'd in the printing of these Paraphrases, whose sence is sometimes differently limited according to the various pointings, which hinder us from translating otherwise than is pointed out. We ought not therefore to rely upon the pointings in the printed *Chaldaean* Paraphrases, or in the Latin Translations, which are sometimes herein erroneous. And besides, the Chaldee Grammar is faulty, and therefore cannot serve as an infallible Rule, because the *Jews*, who have for a long time neglected this study, could not perfectly restore the Chaldee Tongue: Besides, that the method which *Buxtorf* and the other Reformers have observ'd, in correcting the old pointing in the Chaldee, is subject to Errors; although *Onkelos* in his Paraphrase follows pretty exactly the Hebrew Text, *Elius Levita* has however in general observ'd, that the Paraphrasers sometimes take the liberty of putting Preterperfects for Future Tenses, and Futures for Preterperfects, that they translate Participles for Preterperfect Tenses, and make many other such like alterations. They sometimes also according to him leave out words, and interpret the Hebrew falsely; so that we ought not always to judge of the Text by these Paraphrases. There are nevertheless many places, where for certain they read otherwise than we do in our present Hebrew Copies, concerning which we may consult the Criticism of *Ludovicus Capellus*, who gives us some Examples hereof; which is a certain sign that the *Massoret* was not so correct at that time, as it is at present. For example: There is a great deal of difference betwixt *Am*, which signifies *People*, and *Im*, which signifies *With*; betwixt *Nastem*, which signifies, *You have fled*, and *Nistam*, which signifies, *Has been stop'd up*. These sort of varieties betwixt the present Hebrew and these Paraphrases, proceed only from the various pointings. We may however ascribe it to the too great liberty which the Interpreter has taken, of translating rather according to the sence, than to the letter of the Hebrew Text; but it is more probable that these different Translations are occasion'd by the

the various Readings. We may however observe, that the *Chaldee* Paraphrases agree better with the *Massoret* Text, than any other Translations, whether ancient, Greek, or Latin.

As for the *Chaldee* Tongue which these Paraphrases were writ in, we need only observe in general, that the *Jews* after their Captivity brought from *Babylon* to *Jerusalem*, the Tongue which was then spoke at *Babylon*, which they spoke for a long time after in *Palestine*, *Syria*, and other places where they dwelt. This is the Tongue which our Saviour and the Apostles spoke, and which is then call'd *Syriack*. Both the one and the other *Talmud* were writ in this *Chaldee*, and most of the other Books, which the *Jews* look upon as ancient ones, as the *Zohar*, and some other Allegorical and Cabalistical Books, which very few *Jews* understand. This however is to be observ'd, that by the *Talmud* I mean the *Ghemara*, and not *Misna*, which is writ in *Rabbinical* Hebrew, which differs from the *Chaldee* here spoken of.

Talmud.

Zohar.

Ghemara,  
Misna.

As it is hard to keep Tongues in their purity, especially for Strangers, who have appropriated foreign Tongues to themselves, it was impossible for the *Chaldee* which the *Jews* spoke, to be wholly free from any mixture of their ancient Tongue; and thus they mix'd the *Hebrew* and *Babylonian* Language, as the *Jews* of *Alexandria* and the other *Hellenists* retain'd something of their ancient Language in the Greek Tongue. We may then call the *Chaldee* which the Paraphrases are writ in, a *Hebrew Chaldee*, with this distinction only, that the *Jews* who dwelt within the Confines of *Babylon*, spoke *Chaldee* better than they who dwelt in *Palestine*, and the other neighbouring places. There were amongst these last, several *Chaldee* Dialects, as is usual in other Languages. In fine, Length of time occasion'd many alterations in the *Chaldee* which the *Jews* spoke; and it became so barbarous, especially by reason of its being mixt with some other Tongues, that the most learned *Jews* have at present much ado to read their ancient Books writ in this Language, which may be term'd, *A barbarous Chaldee*.

These barbarous words, which are very frequent in the *Chaldee* Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch*, which some *Jews* have publish'd under *Jonathan's* Name, plainly show, that it cannot be *Jonathan's*, the Son of *Hillel*, who liv'd a little before our Saviour's time. But it is very probable, that the *Jews* who knew not who was the Author of it, have call'd it *Jonathan's*, thereby to make it more famous, because there was no other Paraphrase of *Jonathan's* upon the Books of *Moses*. In a word, It is probable, that most of these last Paraphrases were

were collected out of the Memoires of some famous *Jewish* Doctors, whose Names are lost; and this is the Reason why we find several others quoted in the *Rabbins* Books, which we know nothing of. However it is, this we may easily judge, that all the *Chaldee* Paraphrases, except those of *Onkelos* and *Jonathans*, are of a late date. It is strange methinks that some learned men will make them to be of so great Authority. I fancy them to be lately made, not only because of some barbarous words and fables which they contain, because some *Jews* which came after these Paraphrases may have inserted their own Glosses. But I rely upon the whole Body of these Paraphrases, which are writ in a far different style from that of the ancient Times, when the *Chaldee* had preserv'd something of its purity amongst the *Jews*.

As for the Points which have been added to the *Chaldee* Text of these Paraphrases instead of Vowels, there is no necessity for our spending any time about them; not only because they were inserted by unskillful *Jews*, and in a time when *Chaldee* was no more spoke, but also because this new pointing takes away the liberty of translating according to the sense which we fancy is the best. I am wholly of opinion, that *Buxtorf's* Reformation, which *Walton* has preferr'd before all others, ought to be laid aside, because it limits too much the sense of the Text. Wherefore I think it would be more proper for us to go to the most ancient Editions of these Paraphrases, where we find many Letters, especially *Jod's* and *Van's*, which have been very injudiciously left out. It is true, that in many places these Letters have been put in, where there was no need of them; but it is better to have some superfluous Letters, which we need take no notice of, than to take away some which are of use, and cannot easily be suppli'd when they are once taken away. To which we may add, that it is dangerous to form a new method by a few Rules, which we have only out of some Chapters of *Daniel* and *Esdras* writ in *Chaldee*. Besides, the *Chaldee* which the Paraphrases are writ in, especially the latter, is not the same with that in *Daniel* and *Esdras*, and consequently we ought not to regulate the reading of the one by the other. Lastly, One might make many other Observations about the way of writing of the *Chaldee* Paraphrases, but that would take up too much time. It is enough to have spoke hereof in general, that we may take care how we read them, and not credit too easily the Latin Translators of these Paraphrases.

As for the use of these Paraphrases, some Authors have been of opinion, that they ought not to be joyn'd in the same Volume with the Hebrew Text, and the Translations we have of the Scripture; which ought chiefly to be understood of the latter Paraphrases, which are in a barbarous style, and full of vain and superstitious Stories. Others on the contrary commend these last Paraphrases, because we find therein many places translated in favour of the *Messiah*, which may be of use to the *Christians* against the present *Jews*, who seem to wrest the sence of these passages, for the favouring of their prejudices. This Dispute, whether the *Chaldean* Paraphrases be of use or no, was much banded in the time of Cardinal *Ximenes*, who in the year 1515. printed the Bible of *Alcala*, or *Complute*, with *Onkelos's* Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch*; and it was reprinted under *Philip* the II. in the great Bible of *Antwerp*, wherein *Arias Montanus* inserted the *Chaldean* Paraphrases. Wherefore Cardinal *Ximenes* would put in the Bible of *Alcala*, only the Paraphrase of *Onkelos*, which he corrected in several places, and at the same time order'd, that the other *Chaldean* Paraphrases should be preserv'd in the publick Library of the University of *Complute*, after he had corrected them, and took out all the ridiculous and superstitious Glosses. *Arias Montanus* printed also in the Bible of *Antwerp* the *Chaldean* Paraphrases, with some of his Corrections. This latter Work however has been censur'd, as if it were prejudicial to Christianity, and favour'd the *Jewish* Superstitions, which seem to have been approv'd of by the Doctors of *Louvain*, who affirm'd, that they had very carefully read the Latin Translation of the *Chaldean* Paraphrases upon all the Old Testament, and thought them to be useful. This made *Lucas Brugensis* defend these Paraphrases in a Treatise, where he endeavours to defend the Doctors of *Louvain*, who were blam'd for favouring of *Judaism*, by allowing of these Paraphrases.

When Mr. *Le Jay's* great Bible was a printing at *Paris*, with the *Chaldean* Translations, a Religious *Spaniard* writ to Father *Morin* from *Madrid*, to dissuade him from inserting the *Chaldean* Paraphrases upon the Old Testament into this *Polyglott*, because of the Impieties and Blasphemies which are therein. He farther adds, That having had some Conferences with the *Jews* at *Rome* and *Pesaro*, they rely'd chiefly upon the Authority of these Paraphrases, highly commending King *Philip* the II. who printed their Ceremonies and *Talmud* at his own charge. *Judei vero se & proterviam armis & praeclara paraphrasi reassumptis defendebant; summisq; laudibus Regem Philip-*

*pum*

*pum* II. ad caelum extollebant, qui ipsorum ritus, ceremonias, impietasq; Talmud suis expensis excudit, ad quod adducebant Cantica, Tberenos, Ecclesiasten, Job, & 53 Isaiæ. But all these Reasons, and several others which I pass over, could not hinder the printing of the *Chaldean* Paraphrases in Mr. *Le Jay's* Bible, and their being more largely reprinted in the *English Polyglott*. *Lucas Brugensis* moreover affirms, that they had been authoriz'd by 42 *Spanish* Divines assembled at *Alcala* or *Complute*, and by two *Popes* who had approv'd of the Bible of *Philip* the II. where these Paraphrases are printed.

These last *Chaldean* Paraphrases however are not of so great use as some have fancied, because the *Jews* take advantage thereof, imagining that we authorize their Dreams and ridiculous Superstitions in our Bibles, as if we look'd upon these Paraphrases to be of as great Authority, as the ancient Translations they are joyn'd with. It is true, that *Galatinus* and some other Divines have made use of these Paraphrases, for the establishing some Articles of our Faith against the *Jews*, especially those relating to the *Messiah*. But although these are convincing proofs against the *Jews*, being taken out of their Books, I do not think it at all advantageous to Christianity, for us to resort to Books full of Fables. Moreover, the Ceremonies of the *Jews* seem there to be better establish'd than those of the *Christians*; and therefore the victory which we pretend to get over the *Jews* by these Works remains doubtful; besides, that the passages which we fancy favour our Religion, consisting most of them in Allegories, the *Jews* may easily wrest them to another sence, because we cannot infallibly prove the truth of our Mysteries by Allegories.

As the *Jewish* Religion agrees in many things with Christianity, it is no wonder that the *Chaldean* Paraphrases, and other ancient allegorical *Jewish* Books, agree in general with those of the *Christians*, especially in the ways of speaking which relate to the *Messiah*, and that we find several Prophecies explain'd according to the holy Father's sence. But when in the Disputes with the *Jews*, we come more particularly to discuss these same places of the Scripture, they affirm, that general Allegories ought not to destroy the literal sence: On the other side, they show that their Ceremonies are particularly describ'd in these Paraphrases; therefore the making use of them even against the *Jews*, can be of no great use to Christianity.

The *Chaldee* Tongue in which they are writ is of greater use, because since Hebrew has been lost, and that we are oblig'd to go to other neighbouring Tongues, to understand the proper signification

Cardin.  
Ximenes.

Arias  
Montan.

Lucas  
Brug.

And. de  
Leon. Ep.  
Ms. ad P.  
Moris.

Lucas  
Brug. de  
Chald. Pa-  
raphr.



of many Hebrew words, there are no Tongues can be of greater assistance to us for the restoring of the Hebrew, than the Chaldee and Syriack, because they come nigher the Hebrew than any other Tongues. To which we may add, that most of the Paraphrases having been taken from the Glosses of the ancient Jewish Doctors, they may be of great use for the illustrating of several places of the Scripture.

## C H A P. XIX.

*Of the other Translations or Paraphrases upon the Bible made by the Jews into several Languages; with critical Observations upon some of these Tongues, and especially upon the Vulgar Greek.*

**B**ESIDES the Translations or Paraphrases upon the Scripture we have already spoke of, there have been several others made by private *R. Saadias Gaon.* Jews into several Languages. *R. Saadias Gaon*, or the excellent, who liv'd, as has already been observ'd, about the year 900. writ a *Targum* or Paraphrase upon the whole Bible in Arabick, although we find nothing thereof but the *Pentateuch*, which has been writ at *Constantinople* in Hebrew Characters, and since printed in the *English Polyglott* in Arabick Characters. It is also very probable, that the *Arabian Pentateuch* in the *French Polyglott*, was compos'd by the same *Saadias*, although it has been corrected in many places; for if we carefully examine these two Copies of the *Arabian Pentateuch*, we may easily discern that they are both one mans, and that all the difference betwixt them consists only in some Alterations and Corrections, which have been designedly put in. It is hard to judge who is the Author of these Corrections; and I am perswaded we ought not to conclude from the Title only, where we read, as is usual before all *Mahometan* Books, *In the Name of God the Merciful*, that the Author of this Correction was a *Mahometan*, because some *Mahometan* may have been possess'd of the Manuscript Copy, who may have writ it out into *Arabian* Characters, and have put this Inscription before it. It may be that some one not having an exact Copy of *Saadias*, may have suppli'd what was wanting in his own Copy, and may have took the

the liberty of altering some things. However it is, we cannot mention doubt, but that the *Arabian* Copy of the *Pentateuch* in the *French Polyglott* is *Saadias's*, although it may have been alter'd in some places. What more confirms this opinion is, that we find in this Copy certain ways of translating peculiar to this Author: As in Chap. 2. *Gen.* 2. 6. *Gen.* Verse 6. where we read in the Hebrew Text, and all the ancient Translations, *And there went up a Mist*, *Saadias* has translated it with the negative Particle, *And there went no Mist up*; and it is thus in both the Copies. I pass by several other such like places, which show *Saadias's* free way of translating. He changes some proper Names, and sometimes translates his Text rather according to his prejudices, than according to the truth; besides, that living in a time when the Grammar was not perfect, he is not altogether so exact as one would desire. This however hinders him not from understanding the sence very well in many places.

We ought however to take care of easily multiplying the various Readings of the Hebrew Text by *Saadias's* Arabick Translation, because he sometimes takes too much liberty: And herein *Grotius* is mistaken in his Notes upon Chap. 2. *Gen.* Verse 6. where he affirms, that *Saadias* had a Copy which differ'd from all others, because he explains this Verse 6. negatively, contrary to the present Hebrew Text. He consider'd not that the Hebrew Particle *Vau*, which is usually translated *Et*, may also be translated *Nec*, when another negative goes before, as in that place there does. This is the reason why *Saadias* interpreted that place negatively, and not because he had another Hebrew Copy. *Grotius.*

In reading of this Arabick Translation in the *English Polyglott*, I have observ'd some faults in the pointing, which can proceed only from him who added the Points: This however alters the sence; but it may be easily remedi'd, and corrected by the Edition of *Constantinople*, which is writ but in Hebrew Characters, and the Points are in a manner set down but by halves. Wherefore we are to observe, that the Jews who added the Points to this Edition, consulted not so much the Grammar, as the usual pronunciation of the *Arabians*, who lay no Emphasis upon the last Syllables, as the Grammarians do, who point the Arabick Books after another fashion, and according to the full pronunciation of the Tongue.

As for the style of this Paraphrase it is not altogether pure, although it is not so barbarous as the literal Translations. As the Author was a Jew, he has preserv'd some Hebrew words, which the

Latin Interpreter, who understood not Hebrew, and consequently could not consult the original Hebrew, could not understand. Wherefore it would be well if some one who understands both Arabick and Hebrew very well, would carefully review *Saadias's* Arabick Text, as also the Latin Translation, where there are many faults. We read for example in Chap. 32. *Gen.* Verse 32. that the *Israelites* eat not of the Sinew of a Woman, which is ridiculous, and contrary to the sense of the Text. But this Error comes from the Hebrew word *Nafce*, which *Saadias* has left in his Translation, putting it only into Arabick; and the Latin Interpreter, who consulted not the Original Hebrew, has made his own Translation thereof from the Arabick.

Gen. 32.

In Chap. 1. *Deut.* Verse 12. where *Saadias* has translated into Arabick, *Ketsafecom*, the Latin Interpreter has translated, *Historias vestras*, because the Arabick word usually signifies a *History*; whereas if he had consulted the Hebrew Text, he would have found that this word ought to have signifi'd the same thing in the Arabick, as the Hebrew Verb *Kauts*, and therefore ought to have been translated *Molestia*, or something like that.

Erpenius.

*Erpenius* has publish'd another Arabick Translation of the *Pentateuch*, made by a *Jew* of *Africa*, which is much more literal than that of *Saadias's*; but the style thereof is more rude and barbarous. The Interpreter keeps close to the Letter, and translates word for word from the Hebrew Text, as the *Jews* usually do in their Schools and Synagogues, the better to instruct the people in the proper signification of the Hebrew words; so that one must be a *Jew*, or at least understand Hebrew very well, for the understanding of these Translations.

Persian  
Translat.  
in 1551.

We may place in the same Classis the *Persian* Translation of the *Pentateuch*, made by a *Jew* call'd *Tons*, from the Name of his Town. The *Jews* of *Constantinople* printed this Translation in Hebrew Characters, with *Saadias's* *Arabian* Paraphrase, and it has been since reprinted in the *English Polyglott* in *Persian* Characters, with a Latin Translation. The Author of this *Persian* Translation being a *Jew*, has committed many Hebreicisms, which makes it to be of no great use, unless in the *Persian Jews* Synagogues. The Interpreter does not always so exactly follow the Letter of the Hebrew Text, but he sometimes follows his private opinions, especially in the translating of the proper Names of Places, and some other such like. There are some Expositions which are grounded only upon the *Rabbins* Fables; but all the *Jews* Translations have this fault, who can never shake off their prejudices, which they suck'd in in their Infancy. Be-

Besides these Translations, the *Jews* of *Constantinople* have printed two others, the one in *Vulgar Greek*, and the other in *Spanish*; and they are both of them in Hebrew Characters with Points. As I have only had the luck to see but some fragments of these two Translations of the *Pentateuch*, I cannot give a right judgement hereupon. I have however read enough of them, for to say in general that they are very literal, and follow almost word for word the Hebrew Text, which makes them sometimes barbarous and unintelligible. Some Authors have also mention'd a Translation into *Vulgar Greek*, of the five little Books which the *Jews* call the *five Megilloth* *Volumes*, but they were not in the Edition which I have seen with the five Books of *Moses*. The Book of *Job* and the *Proverbs* however have been printed by themselves at *Constantinople*, in Hebrew and *Vulgar Greek*, but writ in Hebrew Characters; and it is said in the Preface, that this Translation into *Vulgar Greek* was made for the *Jews* of those Parts, who understood not Hebrew. The *Caraites Jews* of *Constantinople* read also the same Translation into *Vulgar Greek*; and we find in their Commentaries upon the Scripture, some Greek words which explain the Hebrew ones.

It is probable, that the *Jews* who spoke *Vulgar Greek* in their Schools or Synagogues, are the Authors of this Translation, which is not only us'd by the *Caraites*, but also by the other *Jews*, which we call *Rabbinists*. These last are they who printed it at *Constantinople* with the *Spanish* Translation, to which they joyn'd the Commentary of *Raschi* upon the Law. To conclude: As the *Vulgar Greek*, which this *Jewish* Translation is writ in, agrees with that which the *Greeks* at present speak, and the Hebrew Characters have been fitted to the pronunciation of this modern Greek, I am of opinion, it will not be altogether unnecessary, if we give some insight into this *Vulgar Greek*, that they who read this Translation, may more easily both read and understand it.

We are then to observe, there is a difference betwixt that which we call *barbarous*, and the *Vulgar Greek*, which is the Tongue the present *Greeks* speak. Although both one and the other has borrow'd many words from other Tongues, they however differ in this, that the *Vulgar Greek* differs much more from the ancient Greek, in what relates to the propriety of the Tongue, because it has been made to agree more with the *European* Languages, especially the *Italian* and *French*, as may be prov'd by many Examples.

First,

First, There is nothing more usual in the Vulgar Greek, than to express the Pronouns *le, les,* and other such like, by τὸ, τῆς, and by others which answer exactly to the *Italian* and *French*. For example: ἐγὼ οὐ τὸν ἰδεῖξα, signifies the same as *Jo ti lo mostrai, Je te le montray*. Wherefore we every where find, τὸ, τὸν, τῶν, τῆς, τῶν, &c. instead of our *French* Pronouns, *le, les,* &c. and they are often joyned to Verbs as the *Hebrew* affixes. This makes the sense obscure, unless we observe that it has been taken from the *Italians*, who also put *lo* after the Verb, as ἀφανίζω τὸ, signifies *je, l' efface*. And thus when we find this language at the end of Verbs, τὸ, τὸν, τῶν, τῆς, &c. we must render these Articles by *le* and *les*, whether they belong to persons or things: For example; λέγει τῆς, or according to others, λέγει τὸν, signifies *il luy dit*.

Secondly, The present *Greeks* have borrowed their Participles from the *Italians*; for to express *écrivaint, recevant,* &c. they say, γράφον τὰς Νόμους, as the *Italians* say, *scrivendo, ricevendo*: And I believe this is the Reason why the *Greeks* pronounce not the Letter *Tau*, the same way as they anciently did; and that they write γράφουσι instead of γράφουσιν, imitating herein the *Italians* *Scrivono*.

Thirdly, The Vulgar Greek's *καὶ καὶ*, seems to be the same with the *Italians* *benche*, and the *bien que* of the *French*, although they usually express it by *να*, which is only an abridgement of *ινα*, but they do it directly after the *French* and *Italian* manner: As when they say, πρέπει να κἄνω τὸ, *il faut que Je le fasse, να τον προσκυνῆσιν, afin qu' il salue*; besides *διὰνα* in the Vulgar Greek is the same thing with *per che pourque* in old *French*.

Fourthly, The Vulgar Greek expresses the Pronouns Relatives after the *French* and *Italian* way: For example; ὁποῖο, signifies nothing else but the *il quale* of the *Italians*, or *le quel* of the *French*; and thus they say, τὰ λόγια τὰ ὁποῖα, *le parole le quali, les paroles les quelles*.

Were it not that I should be tedious, I could easily show by many other expressions of the Vulgar *Greeks*, that this Tongue was made from the *French* and *Italian*, whilst these two Nations possess'd some part of *Greece*; besides, a great many modern *Greeks* having since that time studi'd in the Schools of *Italy*, have made their Tongue to come nigher the *Italian* than it did before, and they have gone so far, as to introduce into their Divinity several expressions which are purely *Latin*.

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We may however observe, that the Vulgar Greek which the present *Greeks* speak, differs according to the several places it is spoke in; but it would be too long and tedious to explain all these Differences. We shall only observe, that their pronunciation differs wholly from the ancient way of pronouncing, which some modern *Grammarians* have very injudiciously endeavour'd to introduce into our Schools. It would have been well if we had only took notice of the true and ancient way of pronouncing Greek, and at the same time kept to the pronunciation which is now us'd. For there is nothing hinders us more from understanding of the *Jewish* Translation of the *Pentateuch*, writ in *Hebrew* Characters, according to the pronunciation of the modern *Greeks*, than this ancient pronunciation which we are us'd to. And besides, the present *Greeks* laugh at us, when we tell them that we pronounce their Tongue as *Aristophanes, Demosthenes, Plato, and Aristotle* did, when it was in its perfection. In a word: Seeing Tongues are only for conveniency, and that we may have commerce one with another, it is more proper in the pronouncing of Greek to consult the *Greeks*, who brought us their Tongue from *Constantinople*, than a company of injudicious *Grammarians*, who desire only to show their Learning. It was however convenient for us not to be wholly ignorant of the ancient way of pronouncing of Greek, but to instruct our selves throughly therein, because it may be of use to us; but there was no necessity of observing it in speaking: Wherefore they who new modell'd the Greek, did not sufficiently distinguish what we ought only to instruct our selves in, from what we ought to practise. If we understand not this use or practice, we shall very hardly at first understand the *Jewish* Translation made at *Constantinople* into Vulgar Greek, because they have order'd the *Hebrew* Letters according to the common pronunciation of their time, and which the present *Greeks* to this day preserve.

As for the *Spanish* Translation, joyn'd in the Edition of *Constanti-* Spanish  
Translati-  
ons.  
*nople* with the Translation of the *Pentateuch* into Vulgar Greek, it was certainly made by the *Spanish* *Jews*, who read it at present at *Constantinople*, and in other places of the *Levant* whither they fled, after their being driven out of *Spain*. They speak even in their Synagogue a kind of *Battard Spanish*; and private persons amongst them read a Translation of the Bible into *Spanish*.

The same *Spanish* *Jews* of the *Levant* value also very much the *Hebrew* Bible, which a *Jew* call'd *Lombroso* printed at *Venice*; in which Lombroso.  
Bible there is the *Hebrew* Text, with some little literal Notes in *Rab-*  
binical

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binical Hebrew; to which is added the explanation of the most difficult Hebrew words in *Spanish*.

There is also another *Spanish* Translation of the whole Hebrew Text of the Bible made by *Jews*, and printed by them at first at *Ferrara* in the year 1553. This *Spanish* Translation agrees so exactly word for word with the Hebrew Text, that it is hard to be understood; besides that it is writ in old *Spanish*, which was no where spoke but in the Synagogues. The Author of the Preface to this Translation affirms, that they have follow'd *Pagnin's* Translation and Dictionary as exactly as they could; but I believe he speaks this only to hinder his Translation from being suspected by the Inquisitors; and he has herein rather consulted the *Rabbins*, *Kimbi*, *Raschi*, and *Aben Ezra*, which *Pagnin* usually keeps close to, than *Pagnin's* Authority or Dictionary. *Abraham Usque*, a *Portugal Jew*, who compos'd this *Spanish* Translation, collect'd most of it without doubt from some ancient Memoirs, or *Spanish Jews* Glosses; and this is the Reason why it is so barbarous and hard to be understood.

*Abraham Usque.*

The *Jew* who was the Author of it, was so much convinc'd of the difficulty of translating the holy Scripture, that he has put Astericks in many places where he finds the sense dubious: For example; In Chap. 1. *Gen.* Verse 2. where we read in the Vulgar, *Ferebatur*, he has translated, *Se Movia*, and added an Asterick to this word, to show that it is equivocal in the Hebrew, and may be interpreted several ways. In Verse 20. of the same Chap. where the Vulgar has, *Producant aqua reptile*, he has translated, *Sierpan las aguas serpiente*; and he has put an Asterick upon these words, to show that he doubted of their true signification. He does the same in the following Verse, where we read in the Vulgar, *Cete grandia*, and where he has translated, *Culebros los grandes*. So that by his method he shows the uncertainty of the Hebrew Tongue, which he admonishes us of in his Preface, where he says, *Yes de notar que en los lugares donde se viere esta estrella \* es señal que ay duda en la declaracion del vocablo y alguna vez diversos pareceres*. But they who printed this *Spanish* Translation in the year 1630. with some Reformatiōns, have left out most of these Stars, whereas they ought rather to have added others than to have left out any.

To proceed: This *Spanish* Translation can be of no great use to any but *Spanish Jews*, unless we use it as a Dictionary to translate the Hebrew words according to the Letter by. It may also serve us instead of a Grammar, because the Nouns and Verbs are interpreted accor-

according to the strictness of Grammar. The Translator however has not attain'd to that exactness he at first propos'd to himself; and besides he does not always seem to have chose the best out of the *Rabbins* which he follows; for he has interpreted several places, which might be better translated both according to the sense and Grammar. He sometimes keeps close to the *Chaldean* Paraphrase, sometimes to *Kimbi* or *Raschi*, sometimes to *Aben Ezra*, or some other *Rabbins*; but this he does not do with great judgement, besides that this strictness of Grammar agrees not often with the sense. We ought to distinguish betwixt a Dictionary and a Translation: In the first the words are to be explained according to their proper signification; whereas in the other the words are sometimes to be drawn from their proper and primitive signification, to correspond with the words they are joyned with.

Were it not that I should be tedious by a nice and subtil Criticism, I could easily show, that this *Spanish* Translation is not altogether so exact according to Grammar, as the *Spanish* Interpreter propounded to himself. As for example: He had done better methinks to have translated the first Verse of the *Psalms* thus: *Bien aventuracas de el Varren*, rather than *Bien aventurado el varon*. Besides in the same Verse where we find, *de los peccadores*, the *Spanish* Article *los* ought to be left out, because in the Hebrew there is no Præfix to serve instead of an Article. But these Niceties of Grammar do not please all men, although there are some places in the Scripture, where these sort of Articles, which seem to be of no moment, are sometimes of great importance. We find that even the ancient Greek Fathers have held many Disputes upon this account against the *Arrians*, and other Hereticks of their time; and the *Socinians* at this day hold the same Disputes against the other *Christians*, whether *Catholicks* or *Protestants*. *Cassiodore de Rayna*, in this *Spanish* Translation printed at *Ferrara*, blames the Translation of Verse 6. Chap. 9. of *Isaiab*, because whereas we read in the Vulgar, *Vocabitur Nomen ejus admirabilis, Conciliarius, fortis Deus, Pater futuri seculi, Princeps pacis*, the *Spanish* Interpreter has so ordered it in his Translation, that only the last Epithete belongs to the *Messias*, and all the others relate to God. This change is occasion'd by the Translators distinguishing the first Epithetes, *El maravilloso el consciero*, by an Article, without putting it to the last Epithete, *Sar salom*, which signifies, *Prince of peace*. He seems of purpose to have avoided the translating of the Hebrew word *Sar salom* into *Spanish*, although there was no equivocation in them. It is

*Cassiod. de Rayna in Præf. Span. Tran. of the Bible. Isa. 9. 6.*

certain that none of these Epithetes have any Article or Præfix in the Hebrew Text, and consequently there was no necessity of putting the Article *El* in the Translation of *Ferrara*, following exactly the Idea which the *Spanish* Interpreter had framed to himself.

As for the sense, we ought not to wonder if this Translation is not exact, because all the *Jewish* Translations have this general fault of following some famous *Rabbins* amongst them who understood not Hebrew in its full extent, and who were full of prejudices.

There is another Edition of this *Spanish* Translation, wherein something has been corrected; but this Correction is very inconsiderable, and consists only in the alteration of some *Spanish* words, for others less barbarous, and more agreeable to the present way of speaking. This however has caused no alteration in the style, and the first Edition which is writ in *Gothick* Letters, is more esteem'd than the second that is printed in very fair Characters.

## CHAP. XX.

*Of the new Translations of the Bible made by the Christians; and first of the Latin Translations made by the Catholics.*

**T**His last Age has abounded in Translations of the holy Scriptures in the Western Church. Some learned men who had learnt Hebrew, fancied they could make from the Hebrew Text a better Translation of the Bible, than the ancient vulgar one attributed to *St. Jerom*. Thus in a little time we saw a great many Translations very different one from the other, although all affirm'd they translated the Bible from the same original Hebrew.

Cardinal  
Ximenes's  
Bible of  
Alcala or  
Complute.

Cardinal *Ximenes* was not so bold in his new Bible of *Alcala* or *Complute*, printed in the year 1515. wherein he comprehended indeed the Hebrew Text; but he durst add no other Translation but *St. Jerom's*, which is usually called the *Vulgar*: He corrected however the common Copies in many places, by other Latin Copies which were more correct, and sometimes by the Hebrew and Greek. Besides he plac'd the *Vulgar* betwixt the Hebrew Text and *Septuagint* Translation, intimating thereby, that the Western Church acknowledged.

ledged no other Scripture for a standing Rule but this Latin Translation, which he had placed betwixt the Hebrew and Greek. His design although it was good and commendable, was however ill interpreted by several Divines, and especially by *Nicholas Ramus* Bishop of *Cuba*, who compared this Bible, which was rankt in three Columns, to our Saviour betwixt the two Thieves. The Hebrew Text, according to the opinion of this *Spanish* Bishop, represented the bad Thief, and the *Septuagint* Translation the good one.

*Santes Pagnin*, of the Order of *St. Dominick*, was not so scrupulous as *Cardinal Ximenes*; for after having examined the *Vulgar* Translation, which he could not wholly ascribe to *St. Jerom*, by reason of some faults which he found therein, he undertook the making of a new one from the present Hebrew Text, wherein he thought he imitated *St. Jerom*, who set about the making a new Translation, in a time when the Church would allow no other but the *Septuagint*. This design of *Pagnin's*, which seem'd to be a bold one, was approv'd of by *Pope Leo* the X. who promised to furnish him with all necessary expences for the compleating of this Work. And besides we find at the beginning of this Translation, which was first printed at *Lions* in 1527. two Letters of the Popes, *Adrian* the VI. and *Clement* the VII. which licenc'd the printing of it: The first Letter is dated in the year 1523. and the second in the year 1526.

*Pagnin*, in his Letter to *Pope Clement* the VII. for the printing of his Translation, openly declares, That the *Vulgar* Edition, as it is at present, is not *St. Jerom's*: He moreover affirms, that he has kept in his Translation as much of it as possibly he could. It appears also by a Letter of *Picus Mirandula* to *Pagnin*, that he had spent 25 years in the making of his Translation; and besides the *Jews* who read it, looked upon it as faithful and more exact than the ancient Translations, affirming that it agreed wholly with the Original Hebrew. He spent at least 30 years about it: And thus we cannot say that this Translation, as most others, has been made too precipitantly.

As it is the first modern Translation of the Bible from the Hebrew Text, and that those who have translated the Scripture since *Pagnin*, have imitated him in many things, it is necessary for us to examine him more particularly, and carefully to enquire whether it is so exact as it is usually thought to be, and whether the Author did well in leaving so often the ancient *Vulgar* Latin. He pretends he has followed the Latin Translation, which is supposed to be *St. Jerom's*, as much as the Hebrew Text from whence he translated would give him:



him leave; and indeed he would have done ill to have imitated St. *Jerom's* faults, and to have rely'd more upon the Authority of this Father than truth it self. But I dare affirm that *Pagnin* has not faithfully performed what he designed, and that he has too much neglected the ancient Interpreters of the Scripture, to rely upon the opinion of the *Rabbins*. For example: There was no necessity of changing these words of the Vulgar in Chapter 1. of *Genesis*, Verse 2. *Erat inanis & vacua*, for to put in these others, *Desolata & inanis*; or as it is in another Edition of the same Author, *Solitudo & inanis*; wherein he has chosen rather to follow *R. David Kimbi*, than the ancient Latin Interpreter. In the same Verse where we read in the Vulgar, *Spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas*, he has translated, *Spiritus Dei sufflabat in superficie aquarum*; and he had no reason for the changing of *ferebatur* into *sufflabat*, unless he had a mind to follow the *Chaldean Paraphrase* and some *Rabbins*. But we ought in this place to prefer the ancient Translation before the Interpretation of the *Rabbins*, which is less correct.

Besides *Pagnin's* Translation is herein faulty, that it is obscure and barbarous, and full of Solecisms. He imagin'd that for making a faithful Translation of the Scripture, it was necessary to follow exactly the Letter, according to the strictness of Grammar. This however is clearly contrary to this pretended exactness, because two Tongues seldom agree in their ways of speaking; and therefore instead of expressing the Original in the same purity it is writ in, he defaces and robs it of all its ornaments. For example: In Chap. 1. of *Genesis*, Verse 20. where the Vulgar has, *Producant aquæ reptile*, he has translated, *Repere faciant aquæ reptile*; and in another Translation, *reptificent*: It is true that the Hebrew word signifies *repere*, but there was no necessity of translating in this place the propriety and Etymology of the word, as may be done in a Dictionary. He ought to have observ'd that this word signifies also, in the Conjugation which it is in, to produce abundantly after the manner of creeping Insects, and he in his Dictionary gives it this signification with *R. David Kimbi*; but we may observe that his Translation agrees not always with his Dictionary.

In Chap. 2. of *Genesis*, Verse 21. instead of these words which are in the Vulgar, *Emisit soporem*, he has translated, *Cadere fecit soporem*. He thought without doubt that he translated the Hebrew Verb more according to the Letter, because it is in the Conjugation which signifies *to make to be*; but he considered not, that when one can express this

this Conjugation in the Latin, by one Verb only as it is in the Hebrew, the Translation will be no less literal, and nevertheless neither rude or barbarous. *Pagnin* has observed this method through his whole Latin Translation, who committed the same fault as *Aquila* in his Greek one. I know however that many esteem this Translation, and prefer it before most other Translations of the Scripture; but they have not without doubt sufficiently examined it. Can any one, for example, allow of the Translation of these words in Chap. 6. of *Genesis*, Verse 3. *Non erit ut in vaginâ spiritus meus?* He has accommodated himself to the Observation of *R. David Kimbi*, who gives the Etymology of this word, as *Pagnin* has translated it: The ancient Interpreter has better translated, *Non permanebit spiritus meus*. So that instead of reforming the Vulgar by *Pagnin's* Translation, we ought rather to reform the Translation of *Pagnin* by the Vulgar.

*Pagnin's* method in his Translation of the Bible, has not only rendered it obscure and barbarous, but he sometimes changes the sense of the Text: As in Chap. 8. of *Nehemiah*, Verse 8. where we read in the Vulgar, *Legerunt in libro in lege Dei distinctè*, he has very ill translated, *Legerunt in libro in lege Dei expositi*, which can make no good sense, because it ought to have been translated, *expositè* or *distinctè*, as it is in the Vulgar. But *Pagnin* considered only the nearness of the two words, and this made him make *expositi* to agree with the word *Dei*, which goes immediately before, without taking notice of the sense. A Translator however ought not barely to count the words, but he ought to examine how they may be joyn'd together for the making a true sense, otherwise his Translation will be childish and ridiculous; his Dictionary agrees not in this place with his Translation. *Mercerus*, who has made Notes upon this Dictionary, confirms the Interpretation of the Vulgar, which agrees also with the learned *Rabbins*.

*Mariana* gives us some Examples out of *Pagnin's* Translation, where he affirms he has destroy'd the truth of our Mysteries: As in Chap. 19. of *Job*, Verse 26. where the Vulgar has, *Rursum circumdabor Pelle mea*; whence St. *Jerom* proves the Resurrection of the Body. *Pagnin* has translated, *Postquam pellem meam contriverunt*; and his Translation was yet more obscure in his first Edition, *Et post pellem meam contritam vermes contriverunt hanc carnem*, by adding of three words which are not in his Text, which however he has not set down in other Characters.

These

Genebr.  
Præf. in  
Orig. Ope-  
ra.

These Reflections, and several others which I could make upon the Translation of *Pagnin*, make me of a clear different opinion from a learned man of our Times, who calls it, *The Pattern for the Translations of the Bible: Perfectæ propemodum & absolutæ sanctorum voluminum interpretationis exemplum dedit.* Genebrard has given it a quite different Character: *Minus diligens*, (says he, in speaking of *Pagnin's* Translation) *nimis ambitiosa, nimis curiosa, nimis Grammatica, nimis Rabbinicarum minutiarum emula, quæq; recentium præceptionum subtilitè noxam sinceritati & sententiarum & rerum sæpiusculè afferebat, unde nec satis interdum coheret cum veterum Hebræorum Doctrina, nec cum fidei Catholicæ mysteriis.*

There was besides no necessity of *Pagnin's* changing in his Translation the pronunciation of most proper Names, and of giving *Chava* instead of *Heva*, and instead of *Isaia*, *Jeremia*, *Ezechiel*, putting down these rude and barbarous terms, *Jesabiasin, Irmehiabn, Jechezebel.*

After having examined *Pagnin's* Translation, it is fit we should adjoin hereunto our Judgement upon the Translation of *Arius Montanus*, which was printed in the great Bible of *Philip the 2d.* and which was since reprinted in the *English Polyglott.* He review'd only *Pagnin's* Translation, and reform'd it in places where he thought it was not literal enough. But it has been very properly said in speaking of the Corrections of *Arius Montanus*, *Quot correctiones, tot corruptiones*; for instead of correcting the faults which were very many in *Pagnin's* Translation, he has increas'd them. His method is however usually justified, because in this Work he had only particular regard to the convenience of those that would learn Hebrew; and therefore he took not so much care of casting aside rude expressions, because he translated his Text according to the rigor of Grammar. This learned man, who has here before propounded to us *Pagnin's* Translation as a Master-piece, has also approved of *Arius Montanus* his design; and he says in favour of him, that he designing only to be a faithful Interpreter, and useful to such as begin to learn Hebrew, has despised the Censures of ignorant persons.

It is true that this Translation may be useful to those who would learn Hebrew, because it renders the Hebrew word for word, and according to the Grammatical sense; but I am not for all that of opinion, that we ought to call *Arius Montanus*, *Fidissimus Interpres*; on the contrary we should do him more justice in calling of him, *Ineptissimus Interpres.* Can we give the title of most exact Interpreter, to a Translator who embroyles the sense of his Text? In a word: His whole

whole Learning consists in translating the Hebrew words according to the Letter, and their most common acceptation, without observing whether it agrees with the places where he uses it. When the Hebrew words are equivocal, we ought methinks to make use of that signification which is most proper to them, according to the places they are in; and it is ridiculous to give each signification indifferently, whether it agrees with it or no. This fault however is very usual in the Translation of *Arius Montanus*, who shows therein very little judgement: For example; He has almost every where translated the Hebrew Preposition *Al*, by the Latin one *Super*, and yet the Hebrew Preposition *al* signifies sometimes *super*, sometimes *juxta*, and sometimes *cum*: He does the same with the Letter *Lamed*, which he makes to answer to the French word *Pour*, where it is a mark of a Dative Case. Thus in Chap. 1. *Gen.* Verse 6. where *Pagnin* has very well translated, *Dividat aquas ab aquis*, he has nonsensically translated, *Dividat aquas ad aquas.*

According to this same method he examines not when the Particle *Terem* signifies *præquam*, and when it signifies *nondum*: As in Chap. 9. of *Exod.* Verse 30. where *Pagnin* had very well translated, *Novi quia nondum timeatis*, he has very improperly corrected, *Novi quia antequam timeatis.* He expounds also the Preposition *el*, which is sometimes put for *al*, by the Latin *ad*, because it usually signifies *ad*: For example; In Chap. 4. of *Genesis*, Verse 8. where *Pagnin* had very well translated, *Survexit Cain contra Abel*, *Arius Montanus* has corrected, *Ad Abel*; and this is the Reason why he has in the same Chapter, Verse 12. very nonsensically translated, *Ei quod*, whereas *Pagnin* had translated both according to the sense and letter, *quando.*

He moreover observes this method as well in Nouns and Verbs as in Prepositions: As in Chap. 4. *Genesis*, Verse 10. where *Pagnin* had translated both according to the sense and letter, *Habitantes tentorium*, he has corrected, *Sedentes tentorium.* In Chap. 49. Verse 22. where *Pagnin* has translated, *Ramus crescens Joseph, ramus juxta fontem*, *Arius* has corrected, *Filius fructescens Joseph, filius crescens super fontem.* He seems to have had no other Reason for the correcting of *Pagnin's* Translation in this place, which makes so natural and Grammatical sense, but because the Hebrew word *Ben* signifies more commonly *filium* than *ramus*, and *al* signifies oftner *super* than *juxta.*

Is there any sense in this Translation of Verse 4. *Psal.* 110. *Thes* *Sacerdos in seculum super verbum meum Melchizedeck*? whereas the Author of the Vulgar has very well translated, *Secundum ordinem Melchizedec*;

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sedec;

*Sedec*; and *Pagnin*, *Secundum morem Melchisedec*. But he has follow'd his usual method, in giving to the Preposition *al*, and the Hebrew word *Davar*, the most common signification, without considering whether it was proper in those places. The same thing may be observed in many other places: As in Chap. 5. *Josh.* Verse 4. where he has translated, *Et hoc verbum quo circumcidit*, whereas *Pagnin* had translated both according to the sense and letter, *Et hæc est causa quare circumcidit*.

In a word: If we would take the pains to run over all the Corrections of *Arias Montanus*, we should find that he has translated the Bible rather like a Scholar, than a man of Judgement: And it is strange that *Walton* should prefer his Translation before all others, and put it into the *English Polyglott*, where he had better to have put one which might have given us the sense of the Hebrew words, and not have deviated from the Letter.

There is also printed at *Lyons* a new Translation of most of the Old Testament, with Observations thereupon, made by *Thomas Malvenda*, of the Order of *St. Dominick*. But this Translation is so barbarous and odd, that if the Author had not put little Notes for the illustrating his Translation, and Observations for the explaining the Text, it would altogether have been useless, because the same faults which are in *Arias Montanus* his Translation, are yet in greater number in *Malvenda* his. And thus they who would have a purely Grammatical Translation of the Bible, for the understanding of the Hebrew Tongue, may make use of *Malvenda* his Translation, which will serve them both instead of a Grammar and Dictionary.

Cardinal *Cajetan* also fanci'd exact literal Translations of the Bible, being perswaded that the Scripture could not be too literally explain'd; it being the Word of God, to which it is expressly forbid ether to add, or diminish any thing. This Cardinal in his Preface to the *Psalms*, largely explains the method he observ'd in his Translation of that Book; and he affirms, that although he understood not Hebrew, yet he had translated part of the Bible word for word from the Hebrew. For this purpose he made use of two persons who very well understood this Tongue, the one a *Jew*, the other a *Christian*, whom he desir'd to translate the Hebrew words exactly according to the Letter and Grammar, although their Translation made no sense at all. *Testor ego*, says he, *quod inter hos labores dicebatur mihi ab interpretibus: Dicitio Hebraica sonat hoc, sed non apparet sensus nisi mutetur in hoc alterum; respondebam ego audis omnibus significationibus; non sit vo-*

Thom. Malvenda.

Cajetan  
Præf. Com.  
Psalm.

*bis curæ si sensus non apparet, quia non est vestri officii exponere, sed interpretari; interpretamini sicut jacet, & relinquatis expositioibus curam intelligendi.*

This is the method in short which Cardinal *Cajetan* thought ought to be observ'd, for the making of an exact Translation of the Bible; and the Reason he alledges is, that if we otherwise translate, we give not the Text as it is in the Original, but rather as we understand it. *Nisi Textus adsit talis, qualis est in sua origine, jam non Textus exponitur nisi divinando, sed exponitur Textus ut intellectus est ab illo interprete.* His Translation however, especially of the *Psalms*, is not so Grammatical or barbarous as *Malvenda*'s and *Arias Montanus*'s are; and although he understood not Hebrew, he speaks much better than many Translators of the Bible who understood it but indifferently. He was of opinion that almost all the Hebrew words were equivocal; *Omnes fere dictiones Hebraicae sunt equivocæ*; and as according to him the Hebrew Text is always equivocal, the sense of the Text is limited in the Translations. Wherefore he wishes there had never been any other Translations of the Scripture made but according to the method which he proposes, that we might have at present the true interpretation of the Scripture-Text, and not the particular notions of each Translator. *Utinam talis habita fuisset (interpretatio sic mutila) à patribus, quoniam jam haberemus expositum Textum ipsum sacrae Scripturae, & non Textum confectum interpretum arbitrio.* But although these Rules of *Cajetan*'s are good and useful for the having of an exact Translation of the holy Scriptures, they are not sufficient for the executing of his design, unless they are assisted by the other Rules which we have observ'd at the beginning of this Book.

We may however observe, that Cardinal *Cajetan*'s opinion was condemn'd by *Gabriel Prateole* as heretical; but every one knows that this Author delighted in making what he pleas'd to be heretical. Cardinal *Palavicini*, who endeavours to do him justice, and to defend him from the Heresie which *Prateole* accus'd him of, could not wholly justify him of what Father *Paul* has said of him, in his History of the Council of *Trent*: That one could not be said to understand the Scripture, by understanding only of the Latin Interpreter; but that for the Old Testament we ought to understand Hebrew, and for the New one Greek. *Palavicini*, who look'd upon this opinion of *Cajetan*'s as too bold, answers, That *Cajetan*, who in his other Works has succeeded to the admiration of the whole World, got no reputation by whatsoever he did upon the Bible, because he follow'd the prejudices

Gabr. Prateole.

Palavic.  
Hist. of the  
Council  
of Trent,  
Book 6.

Palavic.  
ibid.

of some persons, who kept close only to the Hebrew Grammar. *Quel grand' intelletto nell' altre opere fu ammirato, in queste, per lasciarsi egli trasportar dalla guida di chi meglio intendeva la Grammatica Ebraica, che i mysterii divini, resto inglorioso.* I am of opinion however that Cardinal Cajetan may in some measure be justifi'd, who pretended not to condemn the ancient Latin Interpreter, or the other Translators of the Bible, but only would have Translations of the Bible to be made from the Original as literally as can be, because there are only these Originals which can be call'd the pure Word of God, and that in Translations which are not literal, there are always some things limited, which express not throughly the Original.

We may reckon *Isidore*, a Monk of *Mont Cassin*, amongst the Interpreters of the Scripture, although his design was only to correct the Vulgar. This Author, under pretence of correcting in some places the ancient Latin Translation which he printed, has taken out many words, and put in others instead of them, which, he pretended, agreed better with the Hebrew Text. He affirms that he could have corrected yet more, but that he was afraid of scandalizing the Church, by deviating too much from its Translation. I cannot however approve of his method, or the medium which he observes betwixt the modern Translations from the Hebrew, and the ancient vulgar Latin one. He had better have made an entire Translation, or have corrected the Vulgar by ancient Latin Copies, than have follow'd no Rule of Translation; whereto we may add, that most of his Corrections from the Hebrew are unexact and injudicious. Besides the Innovations in the ancient Latin one, he has added Notes or Scholia's to his Translation, which explain more particularly how we ought to translate the Scripture according to the Hebrew Text. But he seems not to have understood throughly the Hebrew Tongue; and besides he has only copi'd *Munster's* Observations, without mentioning him.

To conclude: If what *Father Bayl* says of *Isidore* is true, his new Bible agrees with his opinion in the Council of *Trent*, where after having spoke of the ancient Translations of the Scripture, he preferr'd the Vulgar Latin one before all others, and he was for keeping no other in the Latin Church. But as *St. Jerom* according to him was neither Prophet, nor infallible in his Translation, he thought it ought to be review'd and corrected in those places where it was faulty.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXI.

## Of the Latin Translations made by Protestants.

**T**he Protestants do not all agree about the method to be observ'd in translating of the Scripture. Some of them have been of opinion that we ought to deviate from the ancient Latin Interpreter as little as we can: Others on the contrary have wholly quitted it, and preferr'd the *Rabbins* before the ancient Interpreters: Lastly, There have been others who have held a medium betwixt both; and this is the Reason why their Translations differ much one from another.

*Sebastian Munster*, in the year 1534. printed at *Basil* a new Translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew. In 1546. he printed a second Edition, joining the Hebrew Text with his Latin Translation, and adding thereto some Notes. In the Prefaces to this last Edition he has explain'd his method, wherein he openly declares for the *Rabbins* against the ancient Interpreters; so that this is only a Translation of the *Rabbins*, whose Commentaries he has consulted. He acknowledges that he has said nothing of himself, and that if he has committed any faults, they ought to be laid upon the *Jews* whom he has exactly copi'd. He has only taken care to choose those which come nighest the truth; wherein he affirms he has imitated *St. Jerom*, who usually consulted the *Jews* of his time, whom he look'd upon as Oracles, and to whom he was beholden for most of his new Translation of the Scripture.

This new Translation of *Munster's* seems to be better than that of *Fagnin's* or *Arius Montanus's*, who neglected the sence, to keep more scrupulously to the Grammar. *Munster* on the contrary endeavour'd always to keep to the sence, although he kept also to the Grammar; and he has not barely heeded the signification of each word, as *Arius Montanus* has done, but he has besides consider'd the places where these words are found; and although he has not altogether a pure style, he is not very rude or barbarous. His Translation however would have been more exact, had he joyn'd the ancient Greek and Latin Translations with the *Rabbins* Books, because he would then more throughly have understood the Hebrew Tongue. He seems how-

Gen. 1. however to scruple how he deviates from the ancient Interpreters; as in Chap. 1. Gen. where he translates with them the Hebrew word *Rakia*, Firmament, and yet he in his Notes observes with the *Rabbins* that it signifies *Extent*.

As he declares he follows the modern *Jews*, he too easily believes their Tradition, when he finds any words whose true signification he understands not; and I see no Reason why he should in those places prefer the Tradition of the *Rabbins* before the Septuagint, and the *Jews* who liv'd in St. *Jerom's* time. The true way of translating these difficult places; is to go to all the both ancient and modern Translators, and to judge by the series of the Discourse which is best.

He could easily have writ in an elegant style, but that he was afraid of deviating too much from the Grammatical sense, and of not expressing to the life the Hebrew words. In a word: This Author has come up to his design, and I should have nothing to say against this design, had he consulted the ancient Interpreters of the Scripture, who have sometimes better explain'd the Hebrew words than the modern *Jews*. He would perhaps have done better to have follow'd the method of *Conrad Pellican*, his Hebrew Master, who was in the right in thinking we ought only to borrow the Grammar from the *Rabbins*; and that as for the sense, we ought to consult as well the ancient as modern Interpreters of the Bible.

If he had follow'd this method, his Translation would not have been so harsh in many places, and yet no less exact. But he has not spent so much time upon this Work, as was necessary for the completing of it; and he has not seriously enough consider'd the ancient Latin Translation, which he often deviates from without any Reason.

Gen. 1. 22. Although his Translation is intelligible enough, it however is something harsh, because it follows too much the Letter of the Hebrew Text: As in Chap. 1. Gen. Verse 22. where he has translated, *Frustrificate & augefcite, & implete aquas in Fretis*, the Vulgar has methinks better express'd these words thus, *Crescite & multiplicamini, & implete aquas maris*. In a word: His Translation would have been more perfect, had he kept closer to the ancient Latin Interpreter. To conclude: *Genebrard* is not moderate enough in his Criticism upon this Translation, where he blames this Author as not being exact, and for having too closely follow'd *Luther*. *Munsterus* neglecta vocum propria notatione saepe Lutherizabat, & à suo D. Francisci instituto discedebat.

Conrad.  
Pellican.

Gen. 1. 22.

Præf. in Ep.  
Orig.

debat. On the contrary, *Munster* may be said to be more exact and faithful in his Translation than any of the *Protestants*; and he approv'd not of *Luther's* Translation, because it deviated too much from the literal and Grammatical sense. Mr. *Huet* has done him more justice in calling him, *An exact Interpreter: Sebastianus Munsterus Interpres sane doctus in Hebraica, stylum semper collineans, ad eaq; nunquam non se componens*. Mr. *Huet* lib. declar. Interp.

*Munster's* Notes, which are joyn'd with his Translation, may be useful for the understanding of the Hebrew Tongue, and the Scripture style; and they would have been of much greater use, had he not mix'd many unnecessary things therewith, which were borrow'd from the *Rabbins*, and are of no use for the illustrating of his Text. He affects too much the being thought learned in the *Rabbins* Books; and yet if we except the Books of some Grammarian *Rabbins*, who have writ Commentaries upon the Scripture, he is not much vers'd in this Study; which may easily be prov'd by a Latin Translation of his, of a little Abridgement of Philosophy, writ in *Rabbinical* Hebrew; for there are hardly any words in this Latin Translation, wherein he has not been mistaken; and he understood not the very first words of the Title, which make *R. Moses*, Son of *Maimon*, to have writ this Book in Arabick, whereas in his Translation he makes *R. Simeon* to be the Author of it; and he has afterwards translated these words, *Bilescion Aravi in lingua suavi*, without considering that they signify, *In the Arabian Tongue*. He has understood the Grammarian *Rabbins* much better, because he had studi'd them more, and had hereupon consulted *Elias Levita*, the most learned *Jewish* Grammarian of that time.

*Leon de Juda*, a *Zuinglian*, has translated the Scripture into Latin from the Hebrew, at least most of the Hebrew Books of the Old Testament. This Translation was printed at *Zurich* in the year 1543, and *Robert Stephens* reprinted it at *Paris* with the Vulgar in the year 1545, without naming of the Author. This last Edition, where the Vulgar and *Leon de Judas* Latin Translations are plac'd upon two Columns, is usually call'd the Bible of *Vatables*, although it is none of his. Every one knows how it was receiv'd by the Divines of *Paris*, with the little Notes which are joyn'd therewith; but the Divines of *Salamanca* were more favourable to it; for without enquiring who was the Author of it, after having found it might be useful to the Publick, they reprinted it at *Salamanca* in fair Characters, altering but very few things.

In



In a word: This Translation is very agreeable at first, and it keeps the medium betwixt the Translations which are too literal and barbarous, and those which are writ in an elegant and affected style. There are however some places, where the Author fearing to be thought mean in his expressions, does not properly explain the words of the Original; about which however one ought to take more care in a Translation of the Bible, than about any thing else.

For example: There was no necessity of changing in the first Chapter of Genesis, the word *Siccum* or *Aridum*, which is in the Vulgar and other Translations, into *Continens*, which does not sufficiently explain the propriety of the Hebrew word. This fault is very frequent in his Works; and we may say that *Leon de Juda* is not so exact as a good Interpreter of the Bible ought to be, because he has often affected a lofty style, and to make himself to be the better understood, he deviates by way of Paraphrase from the proper sense. He dying before he had finish'd his Translation, *Bibliander* translated the eight last Chapters of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Job*, *Ecclesiastes*, the *Canticles*, and the forty eight last *Psalms*. *Petrus Cholin* translated the Greek Books, which the Protestants call *Apochryphal*. *Genebrard* has inveigh'd too much against this Translation, as well as against *Munster's*. He might have been more moderate, and not have magnifi'd so much the faults herein; but his design was to lessen its Authority, in favour of the Divines of Paris, who had cry'd it down, and at the same time to take away the prejudice of many persons, who took it to be *Verablis*. We cannot however deny but that *Leon de Juda* has sometimes took too much liberty, in adding of particular senses of his own in his Translation, and in limiting, or too much extending of his Text.

Bibliander.  
Petrus Cholin.  
Genebrard  
Præf. in  
Opera  
Orig.

Sebast. Calio.

*Sebastian Castalle*, or *Chasteillon*, as he writes himself in his French Books, made also a Latin Translation of the whole Bible, which he several times review'd. The first Edition was in the year 1551. at *Basil*. The best Edition of all was in the year 1573. at the same place; but as I could not find that, I made use of another Edition in 1554. which was printed at *Basil* also with little Notes. The Geneva Doctors, and especially *Theodore Beza*, have very much cry'd down this new Translation of *Castalle's*, whom they have upon this account call'd *Ignorant and rash*, blaming him for having play'd with the holy Scripture. We may see more of this in the French Preface to the Bible in 1559. *Beza* and *Castalle* have moreover writ one against another upon this account; but as *Beza* understood not at all the Hebrew Tongue,

Beza.

Tongue, he was oblig'd to rely upon the opinions of other men, who affirm'd *Castalle* understood not Hebrew. We cannot however say that *Castalle* understood not Hebrew, if we read his critical Observations at the end of his Translation; and we may very well say that he understood the three Tongues, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, better than any Doctor of *Geneva*. But he was not altogether an exact Interpreter of the holy Scriptures; he affected too much an elegant and polite style, and by that means weakned the sense of his Text. This fault runs generally throughout his Translation; and we may judge hereof by the first words of *Genesis*, which he has thus translated; *Principio creavit Deus cælum & terram; cum autem esset terra iners atq; rudis, tenebrisq; offusum profundum & divinus spiritus sese super aquas libaret, jussit Deus ut existeret lux.*

This is sufficient to show that *Castalle* endeavour'd not to translate exactly the words of his Original, but to make as elegant sense as he could, having chose a smooth and periodical style. He has strove so much to be a polite Writer, that his Discourse is sometimes effeminate; as in the Book of *Canticles*, where he thought to write answerable to his Subject, he ought to imitate the style of *Catullus* and *Tibullus*, making use of diminutive words, which express'd things more feelingly: To these Diminutives he adds diminutive Epithetes; thus he says, not *mea Columba*, but *mea Columbula*: Thus he explains himself throughout this Book; *Mea Columbula, ostende mihi tuum vulticulum, fac ut audiam tuam voculam, nam & voculam venustulam & vulticulum habes lepidulum; capite nobis vulpeculas parvas, vinearum vastaticulas.*

*Genebrard* has very well describ'd this Translator thus; *Versio Castalionis est affectata, plus habens pompe & Phalararum, quam rei & firmitatis, plus ostentationis quam substantie, plus fuci quam succi, plus hominis quam spiritus, plus fumi quam flammæ, plus humanarum cogitationum, quam divinarum sensuum.* He blames him for having at the beginning of *Genesis* translated *jussit* instead of *dixit*, thereby taking away the knowledge of the eternal Word in the Creation of the World. This Interpreter indeed seems to favour the opinions of the *Anti-Trinitarian* Hereticks; but the Hebrew Verb which is usually translated *dixit*, signifies also *jussit*, although this last signification is more usual in the Arabick than the Hebrew Tongue.

Genebr.  
Præf. in  
Opera  
Orig.

*Isaac Levita*, who understood Hebrew very well, and was a great Grammarian, has also said very much against the Translation of *Castalle*, whom he blames for being too bold, and not exact, especially

Isaac Levita  
ta Medi-  
cat. in lib.  
Ruth.  
in

in Grammar. But the faults which he corrects are very inconsiderable; and one may see that he has designedly committed them, for the finding out of a sense which he thought was better, by neglecting of the Rules of Grammar. Wherefore he acknowledges that he designs to express himself in Latin, after another manner than he finds the Hebrew express'd, to the end he might speak Latin, and not an Hebrew and barbarous Latin. Besides being perswaded that the Hebrew Copies of the Bible had run the same fortune as all other Books had, he scruples not to correct sometimes the Hebrew Text according to the Rules of Criticism, which in some places he does judiciously enough. This is the Reason why he freely marks the passages which he thinks are defective, which he endeavours to supply as well as he can. He however seems to be better vers'd in the style of prophane Authors, than in that of the holy Scriptures.

What is most commendable in this Translator is, that he is not at all conceited of his Translation, and that he was learned enough in the Hebrew Tongue to understand that it was very hard, and almost impossible to make an exact Translation. Wherefore he warns the Reader how difficult a work it is, because there are many words which are hardly to be found elsewhere than in the Bible, whose signification we are ignorant of. He is so far from pretending to have committed no faults, that he on the contrary freely confesses his ignorance, and acknowledges that he may have taken some things to have been very reasonable, which in effect were only probable. He in his Notes observes the difficult places which he does not understand, and at the same time adds, that we ought not thence to conclude that he thoroughly understood the other places where there are no Notes.

Lastly, *Castalio* to make his Bible more compleat, has therein inserted some Supplements taken out of *Josephus*, which he has joyn'd with the History of the Scripture, distinguishing them only by other Characters, for fear of confounding them with what really belongs to the body of the Bible. He has also put into the Text of his Translation by way of Supplement, what was only in the Greek Septuagint and Vulgar Latin, and has mark'd these Supplements by the Letters *G* and *L*, that is to say, Greek and Latin. But he had done much better to have put these Varieties in the margin of his Translation, than in the body of the Text. He has also made an Apology for his Translations, wherein he answers *Isaac Levita*, *Beza*, and some others who had writ against him. But as this Apology relates chiefly to the New Testament, we shall speak more largely of it in the 2d. Part of this Criticism.

Let

Let us now examine the Latin Translation of *Tremellius* and *Junius*, Tremel. & Jun. Drusius. which was at first much esteemed by the *Protestants*, especially in *England*. *Drusius*, who is one of the most learned and judicious Writers among the *Protestants*, could not but condemn it in many places, which found him work enough, because this Translation had many Favourers. *Tremellius* and *Junius* were however obliged to review it, and make a 2d. Edition more exact: But their method being faulty, it was impossible for their Translation to be exact; wherefore this 2d. Edition was afterwards condemn'd by *Constantine l'Empereur*, Constant. ad nov. Dan. Lys. who was also a *Protestant*, and learned in the Hebrew Tongue. This Author affirms that he was forced to deviate from *Tremellius* and *Junius* his Translation, because their way of translating oftentimes led them into Errors.

As *Tremellius* was a *Jew* before he was a *Protestant*, he has retained something peculiar to himself in his Translation, and deviates often from the true sense. His Latin is affected and full of faults; he usually puts Pronouns Relatives, where there are none in the Hebrew: As in Chap. 1. *Gen.* Verse 4. where he translates, *Viditq; Deus lucem* Gen. 1. 4. *hanc esse bonam, & distinctionem fecit Deus inter hanc lucem.* And Verse 7. of the same Chapter, *Fecit ergo Deus hoc expansum, quod distinguit inter has aquas, que sunt ab inferiore expansis istius, & illas aquas, &c.* There is nothing in the Hebrew which answers to these Pronoun Relatives; *hanc, hoc, has, istius, illas*. His Translation however is full of them; and I believe that this was the usual style of the *Geneva* Doctors at that time; for *Beza* commits the same faults in his Translation of the New Testament.

We find also in this Translation some words added, for the more fully explaining the sense; this way however is sometimes subject to error. There are others which are translated after a peculiar and not usual way: As in Chap. 2. *Genesis*, Verse 6. there is *Aut vapor*, instead of *Et vapor*. And to defend this unusual Interpretation, it is observed in the Notes that the Copulative Particle which is in the Hebrew, may be also rendred by a Disjunctive Particle; but the Authors of this Translation have took too much liberty both in this and many other places: For example; In Chap. 8. *Nehem.* they have Nehem. 8. translated, *Exponendo sensum dabant intelligentiam per Scripturam ipsam;* there is however nothing in the Original which can be translated, *per Scripturam ipsam*. *Munster*, *Leon de Juda*, *Castalio*, and the other Interpreters of the Scripture, have found no such thing.

Besides these *Protestant* Authors who have translated the Bible into Latin from the Hebrew, there are others who have only corrected the Vulgar in some places where they thought it faulty; and as they corrected not the Vulgar by the ancient Latin Manuscripts of this Translation, but by the original Hebrew, we may in a manner place them among Translators. After this manner *Luke* and *Andrew Osiander* printed the ancient Latin Edition with Corrections: *Luke Osiander* not daring to publish an entire Translation from the Hebrew Text, was satisfied with printing the ancient Latin Edition, which he only corrected in places which he thought did not wholly agree with the original Hebrew; he took not out however the words of the ancient Interpreter, to put his own Corrections in their place, as *Isidore* whom we before spoke of has very injudiciously done; he only adds his Translation to that of the Vulgar: For example; In Chap. 1. *Gen.* Verse 2. he puts *Ferebatur* in common Characters, then he adds in *Italian Letters, Incubabat*, thereby intimating that the Hebrew word rather signified *Incubabat* than *Ferebatur*.

This way of translating the Bible, by preserving the ancient Translation, which had for so long a time been received in the Church, was approved of by the Divines of the University of *Tubing*, who gave their judgement at the beginning of this Bible by way of approbation, where they commend *Osiander* for not having quitted the ancient Latin Interpreter.

*Andr. Osiander*. *Andrew Osiander*, Son of *Luke Osiander*, following his Father's method, printed the vulgar Edition with Corrections from the Hebrew Text, and kept entire the ancient Latin Interpreter. If these two Authors had understood Hebrew better, and had put their Corrections in the margins, rather than in the body of the Text, I should have nothing to say against these two Latin Editions of the Bible. No one can deny but that this method is the best and surest, because we ought not without very good Reasons reject a Translation so long authoriz'd by the Church; and we find by experience that the modern Translators of the holy Scriptures, have had no reason to leave so often the ancient Latin Interpreter, to follow the opinions of the *Rabbins*.

*Rob. Steph.* Lastly, We might reckon *Robert Stephens* among the Interpreters of the Bible, if he himself had not acknowledged in all the Prefaces to his Bibles, that he was not the Author of the new Translations which he publish'd. Thus he declares before the Edition of 1545. that he has joyn'd with the Vulgar the purest Latin Translation he could

could find, not daring to name *Leon de Juda*, a *Zuinglian*, who was the Author of it; and he prefer'd this last Translation before *Pagnin's*, which was too obscure, although he was perswaded that *Pagnin's* came nigher the original Hebrew. He on the contrary prefers, in his Edition of 1557. *Pagnin's* Translation before all others; and he says that he has set down this Translation much more exact, and as the Author himself had corrected it in several places with his own hand. This same Translation of *Pagnin's* has been also printed in another Edition of *Commelin*, which has four Columns, where at the same time we see the Hebrew Text with this new Translation, the Greek Septuagint, as it is in the Bible of *Alcala* or *Complute*, and the Vulgar Latin one. I leave the Reader to judge, whether the Corrections which *Robert Stephens* affirms are *Pagnin's*, and writ with his own hand, are really his or no.

It is certain that *Robert Stephens* has not been very sincere, in most of the Editions of the Bible which he has publish'd, and that he has in this impos'd upon the Divines of *Paris*, especially in the Edition of 1545. On the other side, these same Divines of *Paris* might methinks have treated *Robert Stephens* with more candor and charity, upon the account of his new Translations of the Bible which he printed with very useful Notes, although indeed there were some which ought to be condemn'd. *Peter Castellan*, Grand Almoner of France, who related the business between the Divines of *Paris* and *Robert Stephens* before the King's Council, could not but condemn the excess of these Divines in some things, who found Heresies where there were none; and this proceeded, as the same *Castellan* affirms, from their not understanding Greek and Hebrew at that time. But it is probable that *Robert Stephens* abuses these Doctors, when he blames them for opposing that fair Greek Edition of the New Testament, which he at that time publish'd, with the various Readings which he had taken out of the Manuscript Copies of the King's Library. These learned men (says *Robert Stephens*) thought that the various Readings which are in the margin were Annotations added out of the Text; but this is a down-right Calumny, because there were then many Doctors of *Paris* who understood Greek, and who have very learnedly writ on the Bible. *Robert Stephens* without doubt designed to render the Divines of *Paris* odious, in his Answer to their Censure; as when he there sets down these words, which he makes one of their Doctors to have said; *I wonder that these young men quote the New Testament to us; by God, I was above 50 year old before I knew what the New Testament was.*

## CHAP. XXII.

*Of the modern Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues; and first of those made by Catholick Authors.*

There was no necessity in the Infancy of the Church, of distinguishing the Translations of the Bible writ in Vulgar Tongues, from those that were writ in a Tongue which the people understood not. For as already it has been observed, they had at first no other design in translating the Scripture, but the making of it intelligible to every one; the ancient Greek, Latin, Syriack, Persian, Armenian, Æthiopian, and other Translations, were made for people who understood those Tongues. But as States often change, so also Languages alter; and this has occasion'd the new distinction between the Translations of the Bible made into Vulgar Tongues, and the ancient ones which were used only by a few learned men. We shall here speak only of the Translations which have been made into the Vulgar Tongues in these later Ages.

I know there are several persons who could not endure, that in these later Ages the Scripture should be translated into a Tongue understood by the people, because they thought that these Translations favoured the new Opinions, and caused Disputes destructive both to Religion and the State. Wherefore although the reading of the Bible is in it self useful, they have thought however it was convenient not to suffer it without great caution, following this Maxim, *Non profit potius siquid obesse potest.*

The Church however never wholly forbid it, following herein the example of St *Chrysostom*, and most of the other Fathers, who have recommended to the people the reading of the holy Scriptures. As the Faithful then submitted themselves to their Teachers, and learnt from them how to interpret the holy Scriptures, they might be trusted with the divine Word, which they read with respect, and with entire submission to the Orders of the Church. But it has happened otherwise in these last Ages, by reason of the rise of new Sects, that Tradition has been nothing consider'd, and that every one would explain

plain the Bible after his own fashion, without consulting their lawful Pastors, some of which seem'd in a manner to have contributed to the increasing this disorder, through the little knowledge they had of the holy Scripture; wherefore it was thought convenient not easily to suffer all sorts of persons to read the holy Scriptures translated into the Vulgar Tongue.

We may however say, that before the Innovations of the last Heresies, there were few Churches even in the West, which had not the Bible translated into the Tongue the people understood. For example: In *Italy*, *James de Voragine*, Archbishop of *Genes*, had translated all the Bible into *Italian* from the Vulgar, and indeed pretty exactly, if we will believe some Authors who make mention of this Translation. They affirm in *France* that part of the Bible was translated into *French* under *Charles the V.* and *M. Charles du Moulin* affirms he had seen some MSS fragments of it; besides they of *Geneva* have at present in their publick Library a *French* Translation of the whole Bible, made by a Canon of *Aire*, towards the end of the 13th. Century. I believe this is the same Translation which *Robert Olivitan* speaks of, and which was read at *Geneva* before *Calvin's* Reformation, who set up another in its place made from the Hebrew Text by the same *Olivitan*. There are some Historians in *England* speak of a Translation of the Bible into their Vulgar Tongue in *Beda's* time. In *Spain* also there is a Translation of the whole Bible made by the Inquisitor's permission, in *St. Vincent Ferrier's* time, which has been printed in Folio in Royal Paper, as *Cyprian de Valere* affirms.

I shall not here speak of some much more ancient Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues, and amongst others of that which is supposed to be *Wolphilas's*, a *Gotbick* Bishop, writ in *Gotbick* Language; nor of another writ in *Arabick*, by a Bishop of *Sevil*, in the time the *Moors* were in *Spain*. I shall only add, that there were other Translations of the Bible into *High-Dutch*, before *Luther's* and *Leon of Juda's*, a *Zuinglian*. It is true, that all these Translations into Vulgar Tongues were made from the ancient Latin Interpreter, because they understood not Hebrew in those days. The Hereticks of those times, whether *Waldenses*, *Albigenses*, those of the Sect of *Waldenses*, *Wickliff*, or others, were guided by no other Bible but the Vulgar Latin, which they had every one translated into the Language of their Countrey, that the people might read the holy Scriptures. And this was partly the Reason why the *Catholick* Doctors set up some new Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues, to oppose those

of these Hereticks. As the *Catholicks* since the modern Bibles of the *Lutherans*, *Zuinglians*, and *Calvinists*, have made new Translations of the Scripture into all Languages of *Europe*, with this difference only, that the *Catholicks* have continued to translate from the Vulgar Latin, whereas the *Protestants* have had recourse to the Hebrew and Greek, which they affirm to be true Originals.

The *Catholicks* then who in these last Ages have made Translations of the Bible into the Vulgar Tongues, most of them affirm that they undertook this Work, to keep the Faithful from reading Translations made by *Protestants*. This the *English Catholicks*, who have made a Translation of the Bible into *English* which was printed at *Rheims*, declare in the Preface to their Translation. Some *German* and *Polish* Divines, who have also translated the Bible into their Languages, had no other design but to oppose the *Protestants* modern Translations. This was also the Reason why some Divines of *Louvain* made a new *French* Translation of the whole Scripture from the Vulgar, because they understood that most *Catholicks* read that of *Geneva*. *Nicholas Malermi*, a Religious of *Venice*, and Abbot of the Monastery of *St. Michael de Lemo*, who has also translated the Bible into *Italian*, gives therefore no Reason for his new Translation into the Vulgar Tongue, printed at *Venice* in 1541. To conclude: I am of opinion it is not necessary for us here particularly to examine all the modern Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues: It is sufficient to observe in general, that most of these Translations cannot be exact, because the Translators have consulted only the ancient Latin Interpreter; whereas for the illustrating of many obscure and equivocal words which are in the Vulgar, we ought necessarily to have recourse to the Hebrew Text, as also to the Greek Septuagint, which very few persons understand.

*Divines of Louvain.* We are to observe, that the Divines of *Louvain* were not the first who printed a *French* Translation of the whole Bible from the Vulgar; there was before that another printed at *Antwerp* in 1530. by *Martin l'Empereur*, with the Licence of *Charles* the V. set down at length. There are however some Reasons to doubt of this Translation: First, Because in the Edition which I have consulted, the year of the Impression seems not to agree with what is set down in the Licence; for the year 1530. which is the year of this Edition, is set down as the first year of the Empire of *Charles* the V. and yet it is certain that he was elected Emperor in 1519. Secondly, It is said in this same Licence, that this Translation has been communicated to the

the Inquisitor of the Faith, and to other Divines who have admitted of it. But as there was at that time no Inquisitor of the Faith in *Flanders*, this may cause both the Licence and the Bible to be suspected: And what increases the suspicion yet more is, that in Chap. 3. *Genesis*, where the Vulgar has, *Ipsa conteret caput tuum*, the Interpreter has translated according to the *Protestants* way, *Cette semence briserà ta teste*. Besides in the Preface to this Edition, the Books of the Scripture are divided almost after the same way the *Protestants* divide them; and those which were not writ in Hebrew, are not look'd upon as Canonical, but only of late date, and approv'd of by the Church for the good Doctrine contained in them.

I am however of opinion, that we ought not so easily to condemn this Translation: For it may very well be, First, That there might happen some fault in the Licence; and to speak truth, there is another Edition of this Bible in 1541. the 22d. of the Empire of *Charles* the V. and there is there a mention of a Supplication made upon this account in the year 1530. Secondly, We ought not methinks in this place to take the word *Inquisitor* of the Faith, as if there had really then been an Inquisition established in the *Low-Countries*. Thirdly, The Interpreter might translate, *Cette semence*, in Chap. 3. of *Gen.* because he owns he translated from the Vulgar, reviewed and corrected by ancient Copies: Now it is certain, as has already been shown, that we read not *Ipsa* in several Copies of the Vulgar. Lastly, As for the division of the holy Scriptures, there is nothing in this Preface but what has been taken out of *St. Jerom*, who speaks in several places of his Works after the same manner, agreeable to the opinion of the *Jews*, who have not put the Books here in question with their Canon. This however hinders not but the Church may with reason admit them; whereto we may add, that *Cardinal Cajetan*, who lived at the same time with the Author of this Translation, openly declares the same thing, in his Commentaries on the Scripture.

Besides all these Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues, made by *Catholick* Authors, from the ancient Latin Translation, *Antonius Brucioli* printed in the year 1530. an *Italian* Translation from the Hebrew Text, which he dedicated to *Francis* the I. These were afterwards three Editions of it in 1539, 1540, and in 1541. There is before the Edition of 1540. a long Epistle to *Renée* of *France*, *Duchess* of *Ferrara*, where the Author gives several Reasons to show, that the Bible ought not to be prohibited in the Vulgar Tongue. And therefore this Interpreter had not the same Reasons, as most of the



other *Catholick* Doctors had, who designed only to hinder the Faithful from reading the *Protestants* Translations; wherefore he regulated not himself in imitation of them by the ancient Latin Interpreter, but by the Original Hebrew.

This Translator understanding Hebrew but very indifferently, has followed *Pagnin's* Latin Translation. And as he seems not always to have understood the Latin words of this Translation, which is in itself obscure enough, he sometimes falls into Errors; and besides his style is rude, and as barbarous in Italian as *Pagnin's* is in Latin. I shall only here produce one Example of his Errors, whence we may easily judge of his understanding. In Chap. 8. of *Nehemiah*, where *Pagnin* has nonsensically translated, *In lege Dei expositi, Bruccioli*, who consulted not the Hebrew, has translated into Italian, *Nella lege d' Iddio dichiarata*. As he considered not that the word which signified *Law* in the Hebrew, was Feminine, and that on the contrary the Participle which he has translated, *dichiarata*, was Masculine, in the same Text he has corrected, according to his own fancy, *Pagnin's* Translation of that place, which he understood not.

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### CHAP. XXIII.

*Of the Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues, made by those who are separated from the Church of Rome; and chiefly of that of Luther.*

**T**HE former Ages were ignorant of these various Translations of the Bible, which are at present in the different Religions; for though men were divided in communion, they acknowledged one and the same Scripture. For example: The *Greeks* who were divided into different Sects, had only one and the same Greek Translation of the Scripture; and they have at present no other Translations of the Bible but the *Septuagint*, they having never taken the liberty to translate it into Vulgar Greek: It would also be well that we had no other Translation of the Bible but the Vulgar in the Latin Church, in imitation of the Greek. But the *Protestants*, who have pretended to reform Religion by the pure Word of God, thought it was necessary to have more exact Translations of the Scripture, and which

which agreed better with the Originals, than the ancient Latin one, which had been so long used in the Western Church. They however at the time of their Reformation made use of no other Translation than the Vulgar; and before that time the *Albigenses*, the *Waldenses*, and those of the Sect of *Wickliff*, had grounded also their pretended Reformation on the Word of God, as they found it in the same Vulgar: This may easily be proved by their Translations, which they at present keep in MSS. in their Libraries. *John Leger*, Minister of the Reformed Religion, who died at *Leyden*, affirms in his History of the *Valleys*, that he had an ancient Copy of the Translation of the *Waldenses* writ in their Language; and I doubt not but there are in some Libraries of *England*, some Copies of *Wickliffe's* English Translation.

*Luther* was the first *Protestant* who durst undertake to translate the Bible into the Vulgar Tongue from the Hebrew Text, although he understood Hebrew but very indifferently. As he was of a free and bold Spirit, he accuses St. *Jerom* of ignorance in the Hebrew Tongue; but he had more reason to accuse himself of this fault, and for having so precipitantly undertook a Work of this nature, which required more time than he employed about it. Thus we find that he was obliged to review his Translation, and make a 2<sup>d</sup>. Edition; but notwithstanding this Review, the most learned *Protestants* of that time could not approve either of the one or the other, and several of them took the liberty to mark the faults, which were very numerous.

*Sebastian Munster*, without doubt, meant *Luther's* German Translation, when he says in one of his Prefaces to his Bible, that he could take notice of many places which the modern Interpreters have ill translated, by reason they did not sufficiently apply themselves to the study of the Hebrew Tongue. And besides the same Author, in his Notes upon Chap. 2. of *Jonas*, scruples not to mention *Luther*, and to blame him for having translated in that place by a negative, what was affirmatively expressed in the Hebrew.

This Translation of *Luther's* was also rejected by those of the Reformed Religion at the Synod of *Dort*, where it was agreed upon, that a new *Flemish* Translation of the holy Scripture should be made, because the ancient *Flemish* one, which they then made use of, had been made by *Luther's* German one, which they accounted was full of faults. The *Zuinglians* had also long before that made a new Translation of the holy Scripture for their particular use, having given the same Reasons for not making use of *Luther's*, which, according to

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the opinion of several *Protestants*, was very incorrect, and had been made by a bo'd man, and led away by prejudices.

This is the Reason why he inveighs against the *Hebricians* of his time, most of whom despised his Translation. And that he might more vigorously encounter the modern *Hebricians*, he at the same time attack'd the *Jews*, both in Books which he writ on purpose against them, and in his Commentaries on the Bible, especially upon *Genesis*, where he accuses them of not understanding the holy Scriptures; then he wonders that any persons will value their Dreams:

*Luth. Com. in Gen. 16. Nuga Judeorum arguunt eos nihil scire sacrarum rerum, & tamen trahunt secum magnos viros, & nostro tempore viros in ipsorum lingua doctissimos, qui tales sepe nugae admirantur.*

He acknowledges indeed that they understand the Hebrew Grammar, but not the things themselves, and that therefore their Books are of no use for the understanding of the Scripture. *Norunt quid nominis, quid rei non norunt, itaq; nihil sani dicere possunt.* As then the Grammar only is not sufficient for the translating the Scripture, and he is perswaded that the *Rabbins* Books consist only in Grammar, he wholly rejects them; and we find in many places of his Commentaries, certain common Places against the *Jews*, and some *Protestants* of his time, who followed the *Rabbins* Explanations; he is of opinion that the Translations of the Bible made by these Interpreters, are rather *Jewish* than *Christian*.

*Luther* having laid down this Principle, thought it was much more proper to translate the obscure places of the Scripture, by relation to the Mysteries of Christianity, than to consult the *Rabbins* Books; besides he was perswaded, that there were many Hebrew words which the *Jews* understood nothing of; and that the Hebrew Tongue having been once lost, it was impossible for it to be throughly restored. Lastly, There were none but the *Christians* that could do it, because they only had the knowledge of the true Religion. *Ita intercidit usus & cognitio hujus lingue ut haud unquam perfecte restaurari queat, nec vocum tantum, sed & phrasium & constructionum multiplex & varia est obscuritas, qua fit ut vim & figuras aut emphases plurimarum dictionum & sententiarum ignoremus, aut si qua ratione in integrum restitui poterit per Christianos, id fiat oportet, qui ex Novo Testamento veram Scripturae cognitionem habent.*

Although this method of *Luther's* in his new Translation of the Scripture is sometimes good, it is however dangerous and subject to Errors, especially when a man has form'd to himself a notion of Christianity, according to his own fancy and prejudices. He had reason to

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condemn them who apply themselves only to the Grammatical sense; but on the other side, under pretence of avoiding the strict Grammatical sense, we too much limit the true sense of the Scripture, which we translate rather according to our own notions than according to truth, which *Luther* has sometimes done. This is the Reason why in Chap. 4. *Gen.* Verse 1. he has translated, *I have gotten a man which is the Lord*, whereas he ought with the Septuagint and Vulgar to have translated, *I have gotten a man from the Lord.* *Luther* herein follow'd some Allegorical and Cabbalistic Doctors who had spoke after this manner, being perswaded that the *Messiah* was spoke of in that place. I know that some of his Scholars defend his Translation of this place, and that *Helvicus* has publish'd a Dispute upon this account, wherein he shows this same expression in many other places of the Scripture. But all their Reasons are of no force as to this place of the Scripture, which *Luther* had in his first Edition worse translated, where it is, [*I have gotten a man of the Lord.*] It was impossible for a man who understood not Hebrew well, to make an exact Translation of a Book which is so hard to be translated as the Old Testament is.

Although *Luther* understood not Hebrew very well, he however knew this, (as we have already observ'd) that many Hebrew words were equivocal, and that this Tongue which had been lost, had never been restor'd; but on the other side, I understand not how he could think to restore it perfectly through the knowledge he had of Christianity. He however blames himself sometimes for having too much follow'd the *Rabbins*; but we ought to pardon him a fault he was no way guilty of, since he never understood how to read their Books; his Followers however, through a wilfulness which they usually are guilty of who enter into any Party, esteem his Translation much more than the *Catholicks* do.

It is probable that *Forsterus* undertook the making of a new Hebrew Dictionary, for the authorizing only of *Luther's* opinions concerning the *Rabbins* Books; but this new Dictionary serves only to show *Forsterus's* prejudice against the *Rabbins* Books which he had never read. *Mathesius*, one of *Luther's* Followers, says, that he usually compar'd the modern Interpreters of the Bible who follow'd the *Rabbins*, to *Solomon*, who expected that the Ships he had sent to the *Indies*, should bring him home some rich and precious Merchandizes, and yet they brought him only some Apes and Peacocks. The same Author affirms, in speaking of *Luther's* great exactness in his Translation of the Scripture, that he often had Butchers come to him to dress

*Forsterus.*

*Mathes. in Vita Luth. Conc. 12. apud Grot. de nov. Transl. c. 6.*

dress Sheep before him, that he might in his Translation the better describe the parts of these Animals. In a word: His great Rule which was to explain the Old Testament by relation to the New, was then of no use to him; but as he was perswaded that the *Jews* had wholly lost the Hebrew Tongue, I know not what Oracle he consulted, for the understanding of the proper signification of the Hebrew words.

There are a great many Editions of *Luther's* Bible into *High-Dutch*. Many esteem the Edition of *Weimar* before all others, because *Luther's* Translation is there in many places corrected, without any thing of the ancient one's being taken out; but the Corrections are only set down between two Hooks.

The *Swedes*, *Danes*, *Finlanders*, and other *Protestants* of the North, who follow *Luther's* opinions, have also translated his *German* Translation into their Tongues. *Paul Eber* also in 1574. printed at *Wittenberg* *Luther's* Translation with the ancient Latin one upon two Columns, correcting only the Latin Interpreter in some places, to make him agree better with the Original Hebrew. *Piscator*, who is usually suppos'd to have made a new Translation of the Bible into *High-Dutch*, preferr'd *Junius* and *Tremellius's* Latin Translation before all others, although he corrected it in some places: As he was a *Calvinist*, he chose those Interpreters of the Scripture which were the most famous of that Sect.

The *English* *Protestants* have also made several Translations of the Bible into their Tongue, especially since their separation from the Church of *Rome*. But it would be too tedious, and perhaps unnecessary, to reckon them all up, since they were all rejected at a Conference at *Hampton-Court*, where King *James* commanded a new one to be made, not thinking those which had been made use of since the Reformation were exact. He laid down certain Rules, which those who help'd towards the making of this new Translation were to follow; and amongst others he commanded them to follow, as much as possibly they could, the *English* Translation, commonly call'd, *The Bishops Translation*; and that they should put no Notes in the Margin to illustrate the Text. This design was executed according to the King's Command, and the *English* at present make use of this new Translation, excepting of the *Psalms*, the ancient Translation of which they still use, made in the beginning of their Reformation, under *Edward the VI*. And therefore they have two Translations of the *Psalms*, to wit, this ancient one, and the new one made under King *James*,

*James*, with the Translation of the other Books of the Bible. I speak here of the *English*, who are usually call'd, *Episcoparians*, who read in their Churches the Office of the Liturgy; and the ancient *English* Translation of the *Psalms* is kept in this Liturgy, as is more at large set down in a Book writ by *John Durel*, a learned *English* *Protestant*, in defence of the *English* Liturgy against the *Presbyterians* or *Calvinists*, whom he looks upon as *Schismatics*. This same Author also in the same Book mentions most of the other *English* Translations of the Bible made by other Authors.

King *James* would not let the Chapters of the ancient Translation be chang'd in this new one, nor even the proper Names; whereby he condemn'd *Tremellius's* Translation, who endeavour'd to write the proper Names according to the pronunciation of the *Jews* of *Europe*, and especially the *German* ones. He commanded also that certain Names which had been authoriz'd by use, should be preserv'd, as that of *Church*, and such like.

To conclude: This Translation has its faults as well as others, having been made by the *Jewish* Grammar. What has made it more correct in some places than the others which were made before it, is, that they who made it, had profited from *Drusius's* Critical Observations, as *Sixtinus Amama* has observ'd, and they took care to avoid the Errors which this learned *Protestant* had condemn'd in *Tremellius's* Translation. If I could have read this Translation, I would have more particularly mark'd the faults of it; but the little which I have found of it either in Latin or French Books, convinces me that it has nothing extraordinary above all other Translations; besides that having caus'd several places of this *English* Translation to be translated into *French*, it seems not to me to be altogether exact: Besides, the Translators having left out of the Margin the various Interpretations of the equivocal words, whereof there are a great many in the Hebrew Text, it was almost impossible they should always choose the best. Whereto we may add, that several persons being commanded by King *James* to assist at the making of this Translation, it was hard for them to keep that uniformity which is requisite in a Work of this nature; and besides they were oblig'd to follow certain Rules, which took from them the liberty of making an exact Translation. Lastly, It would perhaps have been more proper to have added some literal Notes for the illustrating of the Text, and the explaining of the Hebrew words, which may be differently translated. But King *James* condemn'd all these Notes, because he understood that these

*Durel in Vindic. Eccles. Ang.*

these Notes being often made by persons which are usually possess'd with some certain opinions, were often contrary both to the good of Religion and the State. This made him openly say at the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, that the worst Translation of the Bible was that of *Geneva*, meaning thereby the *French* Translation of *Geneva*, which had been translated into *English* by some *English Puritans* or *Presbyterians*.

In the year 1618. it was agreed upon at the Synod of *Dort* by those of the Reformed Religion, who were assembled out of several Provinces at that place, that a new *Flemish* Translation of the Scripture should be made, because the ancient *Flemish* one made from that of *Luther's* was full of faults. In a word: Several persons learned both in Greek and Hebrew accomplish'd this design, and the new *Flemish* Translation was printed with Notes in 1637. It agrees indeed better with the present Hebrew Text than *Luther's* does, and they have herein better observ'd the Rules of the Hebrew Grammar; but it is far from being so perfect, as a good and exact Translation of the Scripture ought to be.

It is not sufficient to translate the Hebrew according to the Rules of Grammar and the modern Dictionaries; we ought besides perfectly to understand Hebrew according to its full extent, as has already been observ'd. In a word: Our description of a true Translation in the following Book, will show how far the modern Interpreters are distant from this perfection which we search after, and which the *Protestants* have not understood.

Besides all these Translations of the Bible into Vulgar Tongues, which have been made by the *Protestants*, there are yet two *Spanish* Translations from the Hebrew Text; the ancientest of these two is that of *Cassiodore de Reyna's*, which was printed at *Basil* in 1569. The Author in his Preface says, that he usually follow'd *Pagnin's* Translation, which he looks upon as the best, and that he has had great assistance from the *Spanish* Translation of the *Jews* printed at *Ferrara*, which has been before spoke of.

The second *Spanish* Translation is that of *Cyprian de Valere's*, which is not so much a new Translation, as a second Edition of the former corrected in several places. These two Interpreters seem to have had no great knowledge in the Hebrew Tongue, although they both say, they translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew Text. *Cyprian de Valere* follows very often the *French* Translation of *Geneva*, and when he hits right, we ought rather to ascribe it to chance than to a true judgement, which he himself could not make.

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*Diodati*, Minister of *Geneva*, has also made an *Italian* Translation of the Bible, which was afterwards translated into *French*. But by his method he seems rather to be a Divine and Preacher, than learned in Criticism; he applies himself chiefly to the neatness of expression, and to avoid equivocal terms: Wherefore he adds some words to the Hebrew Text, for the compleating the sense, which he marks with another Character, to shew that they have been added; but this hinders not, but that he often limits the sense of his Text, to make it more intelligible. All persons agree not with him about the explanation of some passages, where he assigns a particular signification to some terms which are altogether equivocal: We ought however to acknowledge, that he has succeeded very well in many places, and that he explains himself more neatly than any other Translator; but we cannot wholly excuse him for the too great liberty he has sometimes taken in his Translation.

He has in Chap. 1. of *Genesis*, Verse 21. followed them of *Geneva*, Gen. 1. where he translates as they do, *Great Whales*. In Chap. 2. of the same Book, Verse 12. he has ill translated the Hebrew word *Bedola*, by *Pearls*: For although Interpreters agree not about the signification of this word, he is not however allowed to put a general Name instead of one that signifies a particular Species; this however is his usual method, because he is afraid of being unintelligible, by keeping too close to the Hebrew Text. Wherefore he has changed some words, and added others, according as he thought fit; and when he has found the sense not to be compleat, he has added what he thought was wanting to the Text: As in Chap. 4. of *Genesis*, Verse 8. where he has added these words, [*Let us go into the Field.*] It is true, he has put them in other Letters, to shew they belong not to the body of the Text; but as he has set them down in the body of his Translation, he has thereby shown that the Hebrew Text which he translated was defective. In the same Chapter, Verse 26. instead of, *Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord*, he has translated, *Then began men to call some part of men, by the Name of the Lord*. And as if this sense was the true one, and he had not sufficiently explain'd it in his Translation, he again expresses it more fully in his Observations, without mentioning the other sense, which is better and more literal.

Lastly, *Diodati* seems not to esteem the *Massorets* Text as infallible, from which he sometimes deviates when he finds a better sense: As in Chap. 49. of *Genesis*, Verse 10. where he has translated the He- Gen. 49. 10  
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brew word, *Shilo*, according to the Septuagint, *He to whom he belongs*, as if we read, *Seelo*, in the Hebrew; whence we may easily judge, that he troubled not himself much to follow exactly the Rules of the modern Grammarians.

As to the Notes which he has joyn'd to his Translation, some of them explain the different significations of the Hebrew words, although he does not do this in all the necessary places; the other Observations come very nigh the literal sense, and are rather the Meditations of a Divine, than the Notes of a judicious man. For example: In Chap. 3. Gen. Verse 21. where it is said, *That God made Adam and his Wife Coats of Skins, and clothed them therewith*, he makes this pleasant Observation, *That God made these Coats after a divine manner, which is not express'd; that God would cloath them himself, to show the necessity of covering their nakedness, and to let them know that it belongs only to God to cover sin by the cloak of justice and satisfaction.* It would have been much more proper to have said, *That the Scripture style usually ascribes to God what he commands men to do; and that therefore we ought not to imagine that God cut out Cloaths for Adam and Eve; this way of speaking signifies only that he commanded them to make themselves Garments, and cloath themselves therewith.* We may observe by the By, that most of these Geneva Doctors understand not how to make good Notes upon the Scripture, because being accustomed to make divine and moral Lectures out of the Chair, they fill all their Books with them.

However there have been a great many Editions of *Diodati's* Translation both in *Italian* and *French*, and he is at present the great Author at *Geneva*. In a word: His Translation agrees with their prejudices, because it makes the Scripture much clearer than it is in itself; but we ought rather to call it a Paraphrase than a Translation: It is however esteem'd, by reason of the Contents and Arguments at the beginning of each Book and Chapter, where every thing contain'd both in the Books and Chapters, is neatly and in few words explain'd.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*Of the Translations of the Bible made by the Protestants into French.*

**R**obert Olivetan, a Kinsman of *John Calvin's*, printed at *Neuchâtel* in 1535. a *French* Translation of the whole Scripture, from the Hebrew Text, as also from the Greek. They read before that time at *Geneva* another *French* Translation made from the *Vulgar* in the year 1294. which was never printed, but is at present kept in Manuscript in the publick Library of *Geneva*, it being laid aside as useless since the other was made from the Original Text. *Olivetan* in his Apology affirms, that he has said before his Work, that he was the first that translated the Bible out of *Hebrew* into *French*, and that before his time, which was in the beginning of *Calvin's* Reformation, they made use of a Manuscript Translation into the *Vulgar* Tongue, made time out of mind.

It is to be feared that *Robert Olivetan* understood not *Hebrew*, although they of *Geneva* affirm he was learned therein. In his Preface to his Translation, where he proves, that the Points of the Hebrew Text are not very ancient, he makes use of a Reason that makes me believe he never read the Bible in *Hebrew*. He says, that the Jews never pointed the 7th. Chapter of the Book of *Numbers*; whence he concludes, that the Bible heretofore was not pointed. It is however certain, that this 7th. Chapter of *Numbers* is pointed in all the Copies, as well as the rest of the Text. This perhaps might be the cause of his being deceived; for that part of this Chapter seems indeed not to be pointed, because there are 4 or 5 Verses which are several times repeated, and the Transcribers have only pointed these Verses in the first place only where they were read. All this Chapter therefore is really pointed, although in most MSS. there are some Verses which are only pointed once, by reason of their being repeated.

Besides *Olivetan* plainly shows that he had no knowledge at all of the Jewish Writers, when he in his Preface says, that *Aben Ezra* had read in the Book called *Tsabat*, that the Jews of *Tiberias* were the Authors of the Points, whereas this Book entituled *Tsabat*, was made

made by *Aben Ezra*. It is therefore hardly probable, that this Interpreter has bestow'd any time upon the Hebrew Text, or that he has read the *Jewish Books*, which he mentions in the little Notes in the margin of his Translation; he without doubt pickt out of other Translations, and several Commentaries on the Scripture, what he found was best. We cannot deny but that herein he has dealt very clearly, and it would be well if those who since him have review'd this *French Translation*, had observed the same method.

As this method is worth our observation, it is fit we should speak something hereof. He affirms, that he has kept close to the Hebrew Text, which is the Original, but that in obscure places that he doubted of, he has put other Authors Explanations in the Margin, taking notice of the various Interpretations of equivocal words, and keeping that sense which he thought was best, in the Text of his Translation: He moreover affirms, that he has neglected no Interpreter, and that he has consulted the ancient Translators of the Bible as well as the modern ones. In a word: He sometimes sets down the Septuagint Translation, and observes their various Readings, when they read the Hebrew otherwise than we at present do. When in his Preface he speaks of *St. Jerom*, he looks upon himself as a Page or Lackey in respect of such an illustrious person; wherefore he seldom deviates from pronouncing the Hebrew words as they are found in the Vulgar. He sometimes calls the pronunciation of the modern Hebricians, *Moustrous*; he allows not also of those who wholly rely upon the *Masoret Points*; and he says, this is the Reason why he has often followed the Septuagint Translation. Lastly, He affirms, that in his Translation he has kept that pronunciation of the Hebrew words, which he fancied was sweetest, and agreed best with the ancient Interpreters of the Bible; but he might for all that have come nigher these ancient Interpreters.

We can't deny but that this method is a very excellent one; but the performance has not answered the design; he seldom marks the different ways how a Hebrew word may be translated: I find not also that he has consulted the ancient Interpreters; however it is, his design is praise-worthy, and a manifest token of his judgement. The *Geneva Doctors* who since him review'd his Translation, ought to have followed the same design, and to have completed it; but they seem wholly to deviate from it, and thereby to condemn it. One man only, who was not much vers'd in this Affair, could not succeed in so great an Undertaking; besides that he spent but one year in it: He

He was judicious enough in not having so great an esteem for the modern Interpreters, to leave the Septuagint and Vulgar, when they furnished him, as he thought, with a better sense. This is the Reason that in Chap. 1. of *Genesis*, he has kept the word, *Firmament*, with the Septuagint and Vulgar, and has put the word, *Expansum*, in the Margin, which is the signification that the modern Interpreters with the *Rabbins* have given the Hebrew word. He has not also followed the most common Opinions, when he was well perswaded of the contrary: As in Verse 2d. of the same Chapter, where it is usually translated, *Spiritus Dei*, he has translated, *The Wind of God*: And for fear of being accused herein of novelty, he has recourse to some ancient Greek Fathers, who have explained these words the same way he has done; he has however mark'd the other Interpretation in the Margin.

To conclude: It was impossible for *Olivetans*, who could not consult the Hebrew Text, and understood but very indifferently Greek and Latin, to succeed in a Work of this importance; wherefore he has committed many faults: As in Chap. 1. *Gen.* Verse 21. where we read in the Vulgar, *Cete grandia*, he has translated, *Great Whales*, as if the word *Cete* signifi'd *Whales* only, and not *Animals of a long figure*. In *Genesis*, Chap. 15. Verse 17. he has translated the Latin word, *Lampas*, in the Vulgar, by *Lamp*, without consulting the Hebrew Text. We need not speak more particularly of the Errors of this Interpreter; it is sufficient that we have given a general Character, whence we may judge of his Translation: He has not indeed too affectedly followed the modern Translations of the Scripture made before his; but he was not capable of discerning of truths from faults; and where he has hit right, we ought partly to ascribe it to chance, and partly to his judgement.

*Calvin*, who made a Latin Preface before *Olivetans*' Translation, wherein he affirms, that it is an exact and faithful one, could not however long allow of it. He thought he was obliged to review it, because he himself in another Preface says, there were many faults which *Olivetans* had slipt over, and that his Language, which is barbarous, ought to be refin'd, and made more intelligible. This Undertaking however was above *Calvin*, who could scarce read Hebrew, and hardly understood any thing of Greek: Wherefore he in the same Preface wishes, that some learned man would apply himself hereto for 6 years, and that afterwards he would communicate his Work to several skilful persons; *Calvin* was so much perswaded of the difficulty of making a good Translation. The

New Edit. of the Bib. by Calvin. The ancientest Edition of this Revision of Calvin's which I have seen, is that of 1553. printed by Robert Stephens. The Hebrew proper Names are in this more softned than in the Edition of Olivetan: In this he has conform'd himself to the Vulgar, whence he deviates much less than those who since him have review'd this same Translation. As he was a man of great judgement, and had for a long time apply'd himself to the Study of the Scripture, he has sometimes better succeeded than they that understood Hebrew: He however minded more the sense than the words, and has sometimes corrected Olivetan's Translation where he needed not have done it; he has however imitated his method, in putting the different Explanations of the same Hebrew word in the Margin; and he quotes the Greek Septuagint; but he does that but seldom, and has cut off a great part of Olivetan's Notes.

Calvin's design in his Revision was to make Olivetan's Translation better French, and more intelligible; wherefore it was impossible for him not to limit the sense in many places, under pretence of accommodating his Translation to the capacity of his Readers. We find not however that he has took so much liberty as the later Geneva Translators; he endeavours to follow his Text as well as possibly he can without running into Paraphrase: When he doubts of the signification of some Hebrew words, he puts the different Interpretations in the Margin; this however he does not often. Besides as he understood not the force of Hebrew words, he sometimes, as well as Olivetan, retains the most improper signification in the Text, and puts the better in the Margin. He was oblig'd to rely upon others; and he has let alone many faults, which could not be corrected but by persons who very well understood Hebrew. Although an Interpreter ought not exactly to follow the Grammatical sense, he ought however for the making of a true Translation of the Bible, to understand the Hebrew Grammar. And this Calvin fail'd in: His good judgement, and his continual applying himself to the reading the holy Scriptures, might indeed give him some Advantages above other men, but he was liable to be deceived, having no other Helps for the translating of the Scripture than those I have just now spoke of. When I say it is necessary to understand the Hebrew Grammar, for the making a good Translation of the Scripture, I pretend not to restrain this Grammar to the Rules which have been of late invented; for whether we understand it by Rule, as we at present do, or else by Custom, without Art; as the Septuagint and St Jerom heretofore did, we are alike able to make a true Translation.

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Although Calvin in reviewing Olivetan's Translation, neglected not wholly the ancient Interpreters, to rely upon the modern ones, he however leaves them sometimes without Reason. For example: In Chap. 6. Gen. Verse 3. where the Septuagint and Vulgar have translated, *Non permanebit Spiritus meus*, Calvin has with Olivetan translated, *Shall not contend*, and has put in the Margin, *Or judge*, without mentioning the Septuagint or Vulgar Translations, which have better translated this place than the modern Interpreters whom they have followed. Calvin had no Reason to leave out Olivetan's marginal Note in this place, who had observ'd that it might also be translated, *Shall not abide*. The same may be seen in several other places, which we need not here set down: We may well enough judge of Calvin's Translation by his method.

This Translation, whereof there have been several Editions, had at first only some little Notes, which serv'd for the illustrating of the Translation; but they were afterwards augmented, and several Observations added, most of which were taken out of Calvin's Commentaries, which limited very much the sense of the Scripture Text, as appears by the Edition of 1561. Since that time the Geneva Doctors have put Observations in all the Editions of their Bibles, which Observations have been alter'd or corrected according as they have thought fit. To conclude: Their chief design in making of these Observations, was to prepossess the Reader, and hinder him in a manner from finding out any other sense. They by this device keep the people to their Religion, and hinder them from being prejudic'd, in favour of any other. This makes them obstinate, because they believe the Glosses of their Doctors to be the pure Word of God.

These Observations differ one from the other according to the different Editions: The best and most reasonable which I have seen, are those in the Edition in Fol. in 1565. by Henry Stephens; and yet they are full of Theological Instructions taken out of Calvin's Books. There are none which express well the literal sense, because they have not been collected by persons well vers'd in the Criticism of the Bible.

In 1588. the Geneva Translation was corrected much more than it had before been, and this is the Translation which is at present us'd at Geneva; since that time there has hardly any thing been done, only some old words chang'd, which were not understood. Cornelius Bertram made this new Revision, who was Hebrew Professor at Geneva, and was assisted by Beza, La Faye, Rotan, Jaquemot, and Goulart. Bertram himself mentions this Correction in a Preface to one of his Books call'd, *Frankellatenfes lucubrations*.

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*Cornelius Bertram* understanding Hebrew better than any who had gone before him, took greater liberty in his Correction both of the Translation and the Notes. We cannot deny but he has corrected many places which were not literally enough translated in *Olivetans* or *Calvin's* Translations; but on the other side he has very improperly in many places prefer'd the *Rabbins* Interpretation before the ancient Interpreters. He has moreover corrupted some places which were well translated in the former Editions, and he has regulated himself chiefly by *Munster's* and *Tremellius's* Translations. There is more judgement in *Olivetans* and *Calvin's* Translations, although they understood Hebrew but very indifferently.

This Correction of the *Geneva* Bible has in general the same faults, which they who translate the Scripture too rigorously, according to the Rules of the *Jewish* Grammar and the modern Dictionaries, usually fall into: But these faults are not considerable, if we compare them with others which proceed from the Headiness of the *Geneva* Doctors. For example: In Chap. 4. *Gen.* Verse 26. where *Olivetans* and *Calvin* had very well translated, *Then began men to call upon the Name of the Lord*, this last Correction has, *Then began men to call by the Name of the Eternal*, which makes the sense obscure and impertinent. It is true that *Aquila* has thus translated it word for word, but he has literally follow'd the Grammatical sense; and if we understand Hebrew but never so little, we may understand that by this way of speaking, *To call by the Name*, is meant, *To call upon the Name*, especially if it be spoken of God.

These Doctors, to make their Correction more authentick, have observ'd in the Margin, that the sense of these words is, that the Members of the Church were distinguish'd from those of the Race of *Cain*, and that the Faithful call'd themselves, *Children of God*. They have put *Olivetans* and *Calvin's* ancient Translation in the Margin, as if it was not exact enough to be kept in the Text. They have besides taken away the Note which was in the Edition of 1561. which very well explain'd the sense of the Text, and put another in its stead, which agreed better with their prejudices.

*Neh. 8. 8.* This prejudice of the *Geneva* Doctors appears yet more in Chap. 8. *Neh.* Verse 8. where speaking of the *Levites* which explain'd the Law to the people, they have translated, [*They gave the sense, and caus'd them to understand it by the Scripture it self.*] There is nothing in the Text which ought to be translated, *By the Scripture it self.* *Calvin* and *Olivetans* found no such thing; but these last Correctors have in this place

place follow'd *Tremellius's* Translation, because it favour'd their prejudices. They have also follow'd *Tremellius's* Translation in other places; as in Chap. 2. *Gen.* Verse 6. where they have translated, *No Vapour*, whereas in their ancient Translations we read according to the Septuagint and Vulgar, *But a Vapour*. They are fatish'd with putting this last Translation in the Margin, and have put another Translation in the Text, which is clear contrary to the sense.

The other Corrections of the *French* Translation of *Geneva* are so inconsiderable, that we need not speak of them. They have only taken out some words which seem'd too harsh, and chang'd some Notes. If we compare the latter Editions of their Bibles with the former, we shall find that they have often increas'd the Errors instead of correcting of them. As they understood not *French* very well, they speak Gibbriish *French*. For example: We find in this Translation almost all throughout the word *Pourtant*, which is a Particle adverbative, as the Grammarians say, for *C'est pourquoi*, or for some other Particle relative. They have confounded the words, *Pourtant* and *Partant*, which (without we take care) alters the sense.

They have besides not taken notice that in our Tongue the words *Bœuf* and *Mouton* signifie Animals which are gelt, and cannot be offer'd to God; and therefore if we follow'd their Translation, we should offer these Animals to God, against the express prohibition of the Law. They have also taken out of *Calvin's* and *Olivetans* Translation very proper words, to put other ridiculous ones in their stead. For example: In Chap. 6. *Gen.* Verse 14. where the *Ark* is spoken of, they have translated, *Tu la Calfentreras de Goudran par dedans, & par dehors.* *Olivetans* and *Calvin* had very well translated, [*Tu la poisseras de poix par dedans, & par dehors.*] In Chap. 30. of the same Book, Verse 37. where *Jacob's* Rods of divers colours are spoke of, they have nonsensically translated, *Il pela les ecorces blanches*, having interpreted the Hebrew word for word, without observing that the style of that place is very curt, and that the sense is, *That by pilling of part of the Bark which was green, the white of the Rod appear'd where the Bark was pill'd away, and the green or Bark remain'd*; which the Vulgar has very well translated according to the sense.

## CHAP. XXV.

*Of the other French Translations of the Bible made by the Protestants.*

Sebast.  
Castalio.

**S**ebastian Chastillon, or Castalio, whom we have before spoke of, made a French Translation of the Scripture, which he dedicated to Henry the II. King of France. This being only a bare Translation from his Latin one, we need not here repeat what we have elsewhere said upon this Subject. His style in French being taken from the Latin has the same faults, and we find the same affected way of writing in a smooth and elegant style, wherein he uses extraordinary words.

As in Chap. 49. Gen. Verse 10. where he had in Latin translated the Hebrew word, *Shilo Sospitator*, he has in his French Translation, *Porte-Bonheur*. His Discourse hangs well together, and is periodical, just as in his Latin Translation, as we may see by these first words of *Genesis*: *Primierement Dieu crea le Ciel & la Terre, & comme la terre estoit neante & lourde, & tenebres par dessus l'Abyssme, & que l'Esprit de Dieu se balança par dessus les eaux, Dieu dit; la Lumiere soit.* This is almost word for word translated from his Latin Translation.

As Castalio understood the Tongues, and the proper signification of the Latin words, better than the Doctors of Geneva, he has not translated as they have the Hebrew word, *Tanimim*, or rather the two words in the Vulgar, *Cete grandia*, by these words, *Grandes Baleines*; but by inventing of a new word, the better to express the largeness of the Fish spoken of in that place, he has translated, *Grands Poissonars*.

This French Translation of Castalio's was printed at Basil in 1555. with short Notes at the end thereof, for the illustrating of the obscure places of his Text; and he differs in his Notes from the Geneva Doctor's method, where he spends not time in making of Divinity or Morality Readings, but treats only of things belonging to Criticism. *Theodore de Beza* and his Brethren not being able to away with any French Translations of the Bible but what they had publish'd, cry'd out as much against this French Translation, as they had against the Latin one, whereby they show'd their jealousy, in not doing Castalio justice, who merited more than they did.

Sam. Des-  
Marets.

We will not reckon *Samuel Des-Marets*, a Minister of Groningen, amongst the Interpreters of the Scripture, who printed the French Translation of Geneva without changing any thing at all, with some Observations taken out of *Diodati*, and other French Translations of

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*Geneva*. The most considerable thing concerning this Edition, is the great expence of the *Elzevirs*, who spar'd no cost for the printing of this Work in fair Characters and excellent Paper. The Author has inserted into this Work some various Interpretations of other Translations of the Bible, and especially of the *Flemish* one, but so injudiciously, that he mentions only frivolous things. He quotes places which needed not to have been quoted, and which are not at all difficult. If he sets down any thing which he has taken out of good Authors, he spoils it by mixing something of his own therewith; besides his Language is barbarous throughout his whole Book. Any one may judge hereof by reading of his Preface to a little piece of Chronology abridg'd, which he has inserted into his Edition: *Rien ne s'y traite, says he, des pointilles des Chronologistes, qui ont plus de voyelles, que de consonnes, & qu'il seroit plus malaisé d'accorder, que les différentes Horloges d'une grande ville.*

This same Author, instead of making short Notes for the explaining of the Scripture Text, falls often into Divinity and Morality Readings. He finds many things in the Bible which learned men than he could never have found; and as for the Notes which he has taken out of other Authors, he has commonly chose those which favour'd most his prejudices, without considering whether they were true or no. Thus in explaining the first Verse of *Genesis*, he says, that the word *God*, which is in the Plural number in the Hebrew Text, proves the Trinity of Persons in God. He consider'd not that *Calvin*, who search'd for all the proofs he could find in the Scripture, for the authorizing of these Mysteries against *Servetus*, is of a contrary opinion; besides, the Observation in the Edition of the Bible of Geneva in 1565. is clearly opposite to him. As *Des-Marets* had at that time the *Socinians* to encounter, he made use of all proofs against them, without considering whether they were to the purpose or no.

His Observation upon the word, *To create*, in the same Verse, shows also that he understood not what he writ. In the following Verse he observes upon these words, *The Spirit of God*, that we ought not by this word, *Spirit*, to understand, a *Wind*, but the third Person in the Trinity. This he has taken out of *Tremellius's* Observations, & he has inserted it into his Notes, only to make the Scripture agree with his prejudices. He might have been more modest in these sort of remarks, by saying only that some Interpreters of the Scripture are of this opinion.

When he takes notice of the different ways, a Hebrew word, which he affirms has several significations, may be translated, he sometimes sets down only Synonymous terms, and all the variety consists only in different French words, which signifie the same thing. For example:

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Gen. 3. 3. In Chap. 3. *Gen.* v. 3. upon these words, *De Peur que vous ne mouriez*; he in his Notes observes that others translate, *Que D'aventure vous ne mouriez*, being of opinion that *Eve* was in this place wavering. One must be very cunning to understand these Varieties.

He sometimes in his Observations makes use of a certain Figurative style, wherein he pretends to be eloquent; as upon these words of Verse 4. in the same Chapter, *Ye shall not surely die*; he cries out, *O bold, impudent, and manifest Cheat of Satan!* In a word: This great Work of Observations upon the *Geneva* Translation, has been spoyld by the silly Additions of him who collected them; besides, that he had not understanding enough to choose only the best.

To all these different Editions of the *Geneva* Translation, we are yet to add one other, which was printed at *Lyons*, by *John de Tournes*, in 1557. This Edition which is in Folio and in fair Characters, is only *Calvin's* Translation, chang'd in some places for the better disguising of it. The Books of the Scripture are order'd after the same manner as they are in the *Vulgar*. There is no distinction of the Books which the *Protestants* call *Apocryphal*, and there are no other Prefaces to it but those of *St. Jerom's* translated into *French*. There are also some few Notes in the Margin, only in imitation of those in *Calvin's* 1st. Edition.

*René Benoist*  
in his Declaration  
upon the  
Translat.  
of the Bib.

He scruples not to place amongst the *Protestants* Translations of the Bible, that of *Mr. René Benoist*, a *Parisian* Doctor. There is a pleasant Story about this Translation: This Doctor finding a new Latin Translation of *Aristotle's* Logick to be much esteem'd of, although the Translator understood nothing at all of Greek, thought of publishing a *French* Translation of the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek, although as he himself confesses, he understood neither the one nor the other. For the more easie accomplishing of his design, he made use of a *French* Translation of *Geneva*, by changing only of some words, and putting other Synonimous ones in their place. But it hapned by chance, that he giving the Printer the printed Sheets with his Corrections, they did not exactly follow his Corrections. Wherefore the Divines of *Paris* finding the word *Cene*, and some such like, which had been coyn'd at *Geneva*, condemn'd this new Edition of the Bible, although it had been made by one of their Fraternity. But *René Benoist* afterwards freely confess'd, how he came to be the Author of the Translation that went under his Name. If he had been but a little cunninger, he would, without doubt, have pass'd for a learned Translator of the Scripture, as well as many others who understood the holy Languages no more than this Doctor, and yet have been much esteem'd of.

*The End of the Second Book.*

A  
CRITICAL HISTORY  
OF THE  
Old Testament.

BOOK III.

*Wherein the Method for the well Translating of the Scripture is treated of, and at the same time is shewn how obscure the Scripture is. There is also added a Criticism of the best Authors, either Jews or Christians, who have writ upon the Bible.*

CHAP. I.

*A Project for a new Translation of the Scripture, where the faults of other Translations are also shewn.*

THE Criticism we have already made, as well of the *Hebrew* Text, as of the different Translations, plainly shews, that we have at present no exact Translation of the Holy Scripture: If we consider the difficulties which have already been observ'd, it seems impossible for us to succeed. We shall nevertheless, to the best of our power, chalk out the way

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which ought to be observ'd in the making of a Translation of the Bible, which may come nigher to a true one than any thing that has yet been made upon this Subject.

Every Translation ought as much as it can to be like the Original; and therefore it is necessary first of all to shew which is this Original by which the Translations of the Bible are to be regulated. If the *Hebrew* Text had not suffer'd so many alterations, it would without doubt be the only true Original: But because several Translators of the Scripture look upon it at present as a Work alter'd by the *Jews*, especially by the *Massorets* of *Tiberias*, they have recourse to the Ancient Translations of the Bible. Some think, that for want of the first and true Original, we ought to keep to the *Septuagint*; and others think we ought to acknowledge no other Holy Scripture but the Ancient Latin Translation, commonly called the *Vulgar*.

But after having consider'd the Reasons alleadged both on one side and the other, I have found a great deal of prejudice, and that it was very hard to reconcile all these different Opinions. No body can deny but that the *Hebrew* Text is the Original, although we have at present none but imperfect Copies; and therefore it is necessary to joyn the Ancient Translations of the Bible with the *Hebrew* Text, if we intend to restore as well as we can this first Original.

We ought nevertheless to prefer the *Hebrew* Text before these Ancient Translations; because when a Work is to be Translated, it is more proper to translate from the Text, than from Translations made from that very Text. It is only necessary to consult them in places where we find the *Hebrew* Text may be help'd out by them; and thus we may consider them only as serviceable to render the Original more plain. 'Tis true, that the *Hebrew* Text at present is very faulty; but on the other side, the Ancient Translations, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, are much more defective. Wherefore we shall joyn with the *Hebrew* Text Ancient Translations, which have been made from this Text, and by this means we may in some sort restore the first Original.

For the farther clearing of this matter, we may observe, that many diverse Readings have hap'ned to the Holy Scriptures, as well as to all other Books. As the first Original, by which we ought to regulate these diverse Readings, has been lost, the *Jews* have

have had recourse to another Rule which they esteem infallible, and call it the *Massoret*. This *Massoret*, as we have already observ'd, is a Criticism of the *Hebrew* Text, the reading of which they have limited as we at present find it; which Criticism they have call'd *Massoret*, which signifies Tradition, because they affirm that in this they have only follow'd the Tradition of their Fathers, and have innovated nothing at all. But as we have already shewn, that the *Massoret* is not Divine, and that the *Massorets* may have been deceiv'd in many places, we are not to give credit to the *Hebrew* Text at present, as to a first and true Original. We shall consider it then only as an excellent Copy corrected by the *Jews* of *Tiberias*, call'd *Massorets*, which were indeed very understanding in the *Hebrew* Tongue, but neither Prophets, nor infallible in their Criticism, or Review of the *Hebrew* Text,

Wherefore a Translator of the Scripture ought not to follow the *Hebrew* Text at present too exactly, but to examine according to all the Rules of Criticism the various Readings which may be found out both by the help of Ancient Copies, and by Ancient Translations. One would do well to print a *Hebrew* Text with all these Variations, as other Books are usually printed. I acknowledge that this is hard, because we want at present ancient *Hebrew* Copies, and that it would be difficult to find any above seven or eight hundred years old, and besides, most of them have been corrected by the *Massorets*. Besides, it is hard to find good ones; and therefore it is to be fear'd, that the various Readings would be encreas'd by being confounded with the Errors of Transcribers.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, we ought first of all to establish a *Hebrew* Text, and observe the various Readings according to the Rules of Criticism, as we use to do in other Books. In the Translation these same Variations may be translated, and put in the Margin, and the best reading may be kept for the Body of the Translation, without following too closely the *Massoret* Text; and therefore care is to be taken of confounding a different Interpretation with a various Reading, which several Authors have done who have explain'd the Scripture. For this we may have recourse to the Rules which we have observ'd in the former Books, to judge when the *Greek* Interpreters, *St. Jerom*, the *Chaldean Paraphrasts*, the *Syrian*

Translators, the *Arabians*, and others, read in the *Hebrew* Text otherwise than we at present do. By the help of these Rules we may distinguish what is truly a various Reading, from what is barely an error of the Transcriber, or a different Explanation of the Interpreter. When we have reason to doubt, we may mark our Conjecture, without confounding of Opinions with various Readings.

The Christians would have done much better in publishing of a Copy of the *Hebrew* Bible, as I have shewn, than in relying wholly upon the Jewish Copies. One might nevertheless have follow'd the *Massoret* Text as much as possible; but that ought not to hinder one from consulting also the *Hebrew Samaritan* Copy of the *Pentateuch*, the *Greek*, *Latin*, *Chaldaean*, *Syriack*, *Arabian*, and other Translations, in places where it manifestly appears that they have had other *Hebrew* Copies besides the *Massoret*.

It would be also necessary to know exactly what really belongs to the *Hebrew* Text, and to distinguish it from what does not; to the end the Translator may take the liberty of changing what has been added to the Text, when he finds a better Sense. For example, it is certain, that the Points which serve at present instead of Vowels in the *Hebrew* Text, have been added by the *Jews* some Ages since. Which has wholly limited the Reading; and therefore a Translator has the liberty of putting in others sometimes in stead of those which are at present, especially if he relies upon the Authority of some Copies, or good Reasons.

We ought not however to be so taken with the Septuagint or Vulgar Translation, as wholly to despise the *Massoret Hebrew* Text. It is true, that the *Massoret* was compos'd by Men that were not inspir'd by God to put in Points or Vowels into the Text of the Bible. But on the other side, these Men who employ'd themselves in the Criticism of the Scripture, invented these Points only to limit the reading or way of pronouncing the *Hebrew* according to the usual custom. For this very reason they call'd their Work *Massoret*, or Tradition, because they alleas'd, that they only publish'd what was come to them by Tradition. This ought to keep a Translator from deviating without good ground from the present *Hebrew* Text.

I know

I know we ought not to have any great value for the Translations of the *Jews*, because they are most of them fictitious. But the *Massoret* is none of these ridiculous and feign'd Traditions. The *Caraites Jews*, who were Schismatics from the other *Jews*, gave no other reason for their separation than the Falsity of the Traditions which the *Jews* believ'd. Nevertheless the *Caraites* have kept the *Hebrew* Text with the Points of the *Massoret*; wherefore they thought this Tradition ought not to be laid aside with the rest. As they were *Jews* they could have no other *Hebrew* Copies but what was authorized by use. The Christians have had a greater knowledge of the *Hebrew* Text by reason of the Ancient Translators, who agree not always with the *Massoret*.

If we could get the *Hebrew* Text which was written in the Hexaplas of *Origen* in Greek Characters with Vowels, we might see how the *Jews* at that time read and pronounced this same *Hebrew* Text. Nevertheless we have Greek Fragments enough either in the Septuagint, or in other Translators, whereby we may know that the reading of the Ancients agreed not exactly with the *Massoret*; whence we may easily conclude, that the *Massoret*, or Tradition of the *Jews*, concerning the manner of reading of the *Hebrew* of the Bible, has not been the same in all Ages. A Translator of the Scripture ought to know all these things, to the end he may not too closely follow the *Hebrew* Text at present, although he ought not wholly to leave it for the Reasons we have already observ'd.

What we have said concerning the Points which serve in stead of Vowels in the *Hebrew* Text, ought also to be applyed to the Accents which are in stead of Comma's and Pointings to distinguish the different parts of a Discourse. The Jewish Doctors are the Authors of these Accents, as they were of the Points for Vowels; and therefore a Translator is not oblig'd to take notice of them when he observes a better Sense. As I have before largely treated of all the Additions made by the *Jews* to the *Hebrew* Text, it will be to no purpose to enlarge farther upon this matter; it is sufficient here to give things in General, that we may forget nothing which may conduce to the well translating of the Holy Scripture.

As we have laid down for a Principle, that the *Hebrew* Text may be corrected by the Ancient Translations of the Bible, and

and that on the other side there are none but bad Copies of these Translations, it is convenient we should search as much as possibly we can how to restore the first Originals of these Ancient Translations. We cannot say that we have at present nothing of the Greek Septuagint, since this Translation was read a long time in many Jewish Synagogues, and from thence it came to the Christians, who had no other Scripture for the first Centuries: And lastly, it is now us'd in the Greek Church, who has not translated the Bible into the Vulgar Tongue. It is true, it is very corrupt, and these Corruptions are very ancient; but we may find out ways of restoring it in many places, as the ancient Latin Edition has been restor'd; and I despair not of seeing one day a new Edition of the Septuagint free from most of the faults which are at present.

For the doing of this it is necessary to gather together all the Ancient Greek Copies, to which may be added the Works of the Fathers, and the Translations of the other Eastern Countries made from the Septuagint. One may also consult the Hebrew Text upon certain difficulties, as was done at the Correction of the Vulgar Translation. One ought nevertheless to take care of relying wholly upon the Hebrew at present, but as it is in the whole Extent, which we have given it in the former Books, where we have shewn by several Examples, that the Septuagint once corrected would not be so faulty as it is at present.

It will be also necessary to correct the other Translations we have before spoke of, that we may not correct the Original Hebrew by corrupt Copies. There are none want correcting more than the *Chaldean* Paraphrases, as we have shewn at large in the two first Parts of this Work: The Points which are added to these Paraphrases won't suffer Translators to find out any other Sense than what the Pointings mark out; wherefore we ought not to heed or wholly to rely upon *Buxtorf*, who has corrected these Pointings after his own way.

## CHAP. II.

*Continuation of the same Project for a new Translation of the Holy Scripture.*

**I**T is not sufficient to have a Text by which we may regulate our Translation; besides that, we ought to understand thoroughly the Tongue in which the Text is writ. Now we must suppose, as indeed it is true, that most of the Hebrew words are equivocal, and their signification altogether uncertain. Wherefore when a Translator makes use of, as he thinks, the best Interpretation, we cannot for all that absolutely say that this Interpretation expresses truly what the Original means. We have reason to doubt whether the sense of the Hebrew words be truly express'd, since there are other senses as probable. This is impossible to be remedied but by comparing together the best Interpreters of the Holy Scriptures, as well Jews as Christians. That which one supposes to be the best Interpretation of the Hebrew words, may be put into the Body of the Translation, and the others may be plac'd in the Margin.

Most of the Protestants have understood this Rule which they have in some measure observ'd in their Translations; but so seldom, and after so negligent a manner, that in reading their Translations one would think that the words of the Scripture could be differently interpreted, only in those places which are mark'd; which is not true. Considering they alleage the Scripture to be the only Rule of their Religion, they had reason sometimes in their Translations not to take notice of the different significations of the Hebrew words. This Method could only make the people doubt of the certainty of their Religion, which was grounded upon so uncertain a Principle. On the contrary, the Romish Church, who besides the Scripture acknowledges true Tradition as a Principle of its Religion, is not ashamed to confess that the Hebrew Text of the Bible may be interpreted several ways by reason of the Equivocation of the Hebrew words.

Origin.

Origen was of this opinion when he rank'd upon different Columns all the Translations of the Scripture he could find, the Septuagint Translation not being of it self sufficient to explain clearly the truth of the Original. The Esteem the Fathers have had for this great Work of *Origens*, to which they have so often had recourse, sufficiently demonstrates, that they thought the Hebrew Text might be interpreted several ways. *S. Jerom*, who in his Translation sometimes follow'd the Septuagint, sometimes *Aquila's*, or *Symmachus's*, or the *Theodosian* Translation, and most commonly the *Jews* of his time, gave us what he only thought came nighest the Original. So likewise he has not pretended to be infallible in his Translation, since he himself affirms, that most of the Hebrew words are equivocal, and that their signification is very uncertain. Wherefore his Commentaries agree not with his Translation, in which he is not always very exact.

Hieron.

Lib. 2.

Apol. Ado.

Ruffin.

I shall not here speak of the Modern Translators of the Bible, who have so often review'd their Translations which are so different one from another, although they have all translated from the same Original. Those who have made Dictionaries of the Hebrew Tongue, follow not always in their Dictionaries what they have put down in their Translations. The *Jews*, who were the Authors of the *Spanish* Translation, printed at *Ferrara*, are also of our opinion. They have in the Body of their Translation mark'd with a Star the words which they thought were equivocal in the Hebrew Text. There are a great many of these Stars in the first Edition of this Bible; and to have made it more compleat, it would have been proper to have added in the Margin the different Interpretations which these equivocal words would bear. This a Translator is oblig'd to observe, that he may distinguish what is truly the Word of God, from his Translation, which very often is but probable. The Protestants have not took care, in refusing to receive the Catholick Traditions, because they alleadge them to be but humane; they have not, I say, took care of falling into the same fault they blame the Catholicks for, because they receive for the pure Word of God the Traditions of the Bible, which in many places contains things purely humane.

Protest.

To proceed, it is not easie to observe exactly the different Interpretations which most of the Hebrew words will bear. To arrive

arrive to this, one ought to have studied the Hebrew otherwise than it is ordinarily taught in the Schools, and Dictionaries for that Tongue. Besides, the Grammar now us'd is not perfect. When a Language is to be reduc'd to Art, the Precepts this Art is compos'd of, ought to be drawn from not only some, but even all the Notions which that Language can express. Nevertheless the Hebrew Grammar we have at present has been took from the Books of *R. David Kimbi*, *Esra Elias Levita*, and some other Modern *Jews*, who could not form a sufficient Idea of the Hebrew Tongue from a Text which has been limited by the *Massoret Jews*. We ought not then wholly to rely upon the Rabbins; but to understand perfectly the Hebrew Tongue, we ought to consult the Ancient Greek Translators, and *St. Jerom*, by joyning with them the *Massoret*, as we have shewn in the two first Books. One may by this means defend the Ancient Translators in many places where the Modern ones have left them without any reason, but because they understood not well the Hebrew Tongue.

For the more easie compassing of this design, we ought to make use of the Bible Concordances, and especially that of *Conrard Kirchers*, where at the first we may see how the Septuagint explains every Hebrew word of the Bible. *Marius de Carlasio's* Hebrew Concordance would also be very useful; because it gives the Vulgar and Septuagint Interpretation, when these two Tranlations differ in the translating of a word.

The Modern Interpreters translate not the Bible after this manner. The Translations of most esteem at present have most of them been made from the Grammar and Dictionary of *R. D. Kimbi*, by joyning sometimes the Commentaries of *Raschi*, *Aben Esra*, and some other Rabbins who could not give all the necessary helps requir'd for the well-translating of the Holy Scripture. Most of those who at present boast of understanding the Hebrew Tongue, have scarcely ever had any other Master than *Buxtorfs* Dictionary, which they have look'd upon as the best, because it is the concisest and most methodical; nevertheless he is the least copious in the significations of the Hebrew words, in that he took the Rabbins Books for his Rule.

*Forster* understanding this error of the Modern Hebreicians, and partly to favour the prejudices of *Luther*, made a Hebrew Dictionary, wherein he very much finds fault with those who follow the Rabbins. This Dictionary has been esteem'd by many

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persö ns,

R. R. D. Kimbi, A. ben Esra Elias Levita.

Conrard Kirchers Concord. of the Bib. Mar. de Carlas. Concord. of the Bib. Edit. Rome.

R. D. Kimbi, Raschi, Aben Esra.

Buxtorfs.

Forsterus.



*Kircher.* persons, even amongst the Protestants, and *Kircher* has made use of it in the Greek Concordance of the Septuagint. But it may reasonably be said, that *Forster* has took notice of a fault he could not correct. He undertook a Work above him, and he was too blame to condemn the Rabbins Books, which he neither understood, nor had read. When a Language once lost is to be restor'd, and there are but few Books writ in that Language, we are to search into all those which may help us in this design. Now it is certain there are many Rabbins who understand the Hebrew Tongue, which ought to be joyn'd with the ancient Interpreters in the making of an exact Dictionary for this Language. There is no way else to translate the Holy Scriptuer well.

*Rabbins.**Caraites Rabbins.*

We ought nevertheless to take care to choose those Rabbins who have most improv'd their own Language; for all have not been equally excellent in this Study; and those are to be prefer'd, who have explain'd the Scripture according to the Letter, and consequently the *Caraites Jews* before the Rabbinitis, or those of the *Talmud*. It is true, that we have but few of the *Caraites Jews* Books printed; but we may easily send for them to *Constantinople*, where there are a pretty many. The *Jews* which the Modern Translators of the Bible have consulted are all Rabbinitis, and they are most of them prejudic'd in favour of their Traditions and the *Talmud*. On the contrary, those who are called *Caraites*, or Textuaries, lay aside the *Talmud*, and Tradition, and apply themselves to the interpreting of the Scripture according to the Letter. We ought not however wholly to neglect the Rabbinit *Jews*, especially the *Spaniards*, because many of them have stuck to the Literal Sense of the Scripture. We may also make great use of some Jewish Translations, which translate the Hebrew word for word; for example, the *Spanish* Translation printed at *Ferrara*, and the two Translations of the *Pentateuch* printed at *Constantinople*, the one in *Spanish*, and the other in *Vulgar Greek*.

Although these Jewish Translations are written in a rude and barbarous Language, they may be useful to a Translator who understands to make use of them as of a Dictionary; for by that one may know the signification of the Hebrew words most us'd in the Jewish Synagogues: To these may be joyn'd the Interpretation of the Ancient Translations, which will shew us what.

what was most approv'd of in their time. When both these Ancient and Modern Interpreters agree, it is a certain sign that the Hebrew Tongue has been preserv'd in those places, at least amongst the Learned Men.

I do not think it absolutely necessary to read the new Translations of the Christians to make a good one; because most of those who made them understood not the Hebrew Tongue, and when in any place they have hit upon the right, we ought rather to impute it to chance, than to their understanding. Those who understood the Hebrew, read only the Rabbins Books; and and therefore it is more proper to read the Rabbins themselves, than these new Translations of the Christians. To which we may add, that they have made their Translations with too much precipitancy.

It is not sufficient for an Interpreter of the Scripture to understand the Hebrew Tongue after the manner we have been speaking of, or the other Languages which are useful in the comparing the Ancient Translations with the Original. He ought moreover to understand the Tongue he translates into; otherwise he will make himself but ridiculous, as the *Geneva* Doctors have done, who made the last Translation of their *French* Bible, which we have already spoke of.

We may nevertheless observe, that in this knowlerge of the Hebrew Tongue, we ought not to be so very nice as to enervate the Sense of the Author. But we are to make use of the Expressions which come nighest the Original; and it is enough if our Expressions are not out of use. The Jewish Translations are herein all faulty, in so much as by reason of their keeping too closely to the Letter of the Original Hebrew, it is hard to understand them. On the contrary, *Sebastian Chastillon* has so much affected a neat and polite Style in his Latin Translation of the Bible, that he has often deviated from his Text.

A Translator of the Scripture ought not wholly to observe the order of the words as they are in the Original; otherwise it will be impossible for him not to fall into Equivocations, because Languages agree not altogether in the ways of expressing things one with another. He ought however to take care, that in changing the order of the words he mistakes not the sense. Wherefore he ought to be much conversant with the Style of the Holy Scriptures before he translates them. There is nothing

more ridiculous, than for a Translator to search for a Chain and Order, when there is none in the Text, and he ought not to make an Author speak otherwise than he does, under pretence of finding out an Order and Sense which looks better. This however has been the fault of most of the Translators of the Bible. They add Particles, Conjunctions, and other Links, to make their Translations more pleasing, or their discourse more compact; and consider not, that by this means they alter the Text, as we shall hereafter make appear.

When we meet with words whose signification we do not precisely know, because they belong to some Art, or Custom, which Translators are not always acquainted with, we may then consult some one of the same Art, and enquire into the present Customs of the Levant, because they may very much help to clear the Scripture way of speaking, which agrees not always with ours. If we cannot be instructed of all we would be, we ought however to take heed of putting boldly any thing we doubt of into our Translation. We ought also to put little Notes in the Margin, to warn the Reader that we understand not certainly the Hebrew word, and that it belongs to an Art or Custom which we are ignorant of.

And however, not to leave the Reader wholly at an uncertainty, we ought to direct him to a Dictionary of these hard and obscure words plac'd at the end of the Translation. This Dictionary ought to contain the Names of Animals, Plants, Jewels, Instruments, and such like things, which the Jews themselves understand not, since the disuse of the Hebrew Tongue amongst them. When any one of these words seems to be wholly uncertain, and that we cannot determine for one signification more than another, we ought to put the words of the Text into the Translation, and set down in the Dictionary our opinions upon that word; and when we have Reasons to stand to one Sense rather than another, we may put that Interpretation which we think is the best into the Translation; but we ought however to direct the Reader to the Dictionary, where ought to be set down in short what the most learned Translators of the Scripture, whether Jews or Christians, have thereupon observ'd; and at the same time we ought to give the Reasons why we prefer'd the Translation in the Text before all others.

By

By this means we may have a Translation, wherein what is certain may be distinguish'd from what is uncertain and doubtful, and from what we are wholly ignorant of. For example, amongst the Animals of the Scripture, we may know which Names we certainly understand, which we doubt of, and lastly, which we have scarce any knowledge of. Although we cannot always tell the true signification of an Animal or a Plant, however we shall be sufficiently instructed by this Dictionary not to put down in our Translation one word which has a different signification from that in the Text. We may not always exactly know what a word signifies; but we may however know that it signifies not such or such a thing. For example, I doubt of the signification of the Hebrew word which those of Geneva, and some other Interpreters, in Chap. 1. Gen. Verse 21. have translated Whales. By the help of this Dictionary I should easily find out this Translation to be false, not only in this place, but in that place of the New Testament, where many French Translators have set down that *Jonas* was three days in the Whales-Belly; which however is not in the Text of the Gospel, and this common opinion is grounded only upon a false translation of the word *Cete*, which signifies in it self a long and large Animal, and in that place a great Fish, and not a Whale.

If we would take the pains to look a little farther, and read the Text of the Prophet *Jonas*, we should find that he speaks not in particular of a Whale, but generally of a great Fish. Those who have seen Whales know very well that this Animal cannot devour a Man whole.

The Dictionary we have been speaking of ought to serve as a Supplement to the Translation, we ought for the greater conveniency to place it at the end of the Bible, and for fear of diverting the Reader by too long and troublesome Observations, it is sufficient to mind him in reading of the Scripture of these difficulties. We may observe the same Method as to the Geography, Chronology, and Genealogies: We ought to compose Tables with Explanations of the most difficult places. *Eusebius* gave us this Example, who made a Dictionary of the Names of the Towns, and other places mentioned in the Scripture. *St. Jerom*, who look'd upon it as a useful Piece, translated it after his own method into Latin, that is to say, by correcting and reforming of it. The English Protestants have likewise in their

English  
Trans-

Translation of the Bible, inserted the Genealogies, which are very useful, and would be yet more, if they had explain'd the difficulties which are in these Genealogies. Lastly, there are several Editions of the Bible with Chronological Tables. We ought to choose the exactest of them, that the Translation, which we here form but a general Idea of, may be compleat. I speak not of the Method to be observ'd in the Translation of the New Testament, because I reserve the treating of that for another Volume, where I shall give the History of the New Testament, as I now do of the old.

### CHAP. III.

#### *New Proofs of the difficulties to be met with in the making of a good Translation of the Holy Scripture.*

I Have already observ'd, that what made the Translation of the Holy Scripture to be so hard, was chiefly our not understanding of the Hebrew Tongue, and the manner of these Books being compos'd or collected. It will be convenient at present to shew in particular, what we have as yet but explain'd in general terms. The Scripture is compos'd of Books Historical, Moral, and Prophetical. No doubt but the Historical Books are more easie to translate than the others which can hardly be translated into any Language. The Style of *Ecclesiastes*, *Proverbs*, *Job*, and the *Canticles*, is so concise and short, that it is very hard to find the sense compleat. I speak not here of many Terms and Expressions which we have no knowledge of, nor of Comparisons which are wholly out of use, and which the *Jews* themselves understand not any more than we. The Prophecies are obscure, not only by the reason of the Figurative Expressions, but by reason also of the matter they treat of. *Isaiah*, who had the most polite Style of all the Holy Writers, is nevertheless very obscure. There are only then the Historical Books which may easily

easily be translated; and yet I intend to shew, that there are difficulties therein as well as in the other Books of the Bible. Let us begin with the first Chapter of *Genesis*.

The usual Translation of the first words of *Genesis* is, *In the Gen. 1. beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*; whence we infer, that all things were made of nothing. But if we diligently examine the Hebrew words, there are two ways of translating them according to the proper Grammatical sense. We may translate, *In the beginning that God created the Heaven and the Earth, or before that God created the Heaven and the Earth, that the Earth was without form, and that darkness was, and that the Spirit of God, and God said let there be Light, &c.* These different Translations are all according to the rigor and Grammatical sense. The most learned *Jews* affirm, that the first which we usually follow is not the most literal, because they say that the Hebrew word *In the beginning* is link'd with what follows, and consequently ought to be translated, *In the beginning that God created, or Before that God created.* *Grotius* prefers this last Interpretation before all others, and so we cannot absolutely conclude from these first words of *Genesis*, that all things were made of nothing. On the contrary, *Grot. An- not. in Cap. 1. Gen.* we ought more likely to suppose, that before God made the Heaven and the Earth as they now are, there was a certain matter from whence he made them. There is then no other ground for the common belief of the Creation of the World, but the Tradition of the *Jews*, which afterwards came down to the Christians: And if we should divide this Ancient Tradition from the Text of the Scripture, we can draw no certain Conclusion to prove that the World was created after that manner as we believe it. To conclude, this seems to me to be the most natural sense, *In the Beginning that God created the World, he created the Heaven and the Earth*; that is to say, that the first thing God created, was the Heaven and the Earth.

I shall not here examine the Theological Question upon the word *God* in the same Verse; because I here take notice only of the Grammatical sense, to shew that it is very difficult to translate the Bible according to the Letter, and to give to every word its proper signification. As the word *God* in this place is in the Hebrew in the Plural Number, and the Verb which signifies *Created* is in the Singular, some Divines have fancy'd, that by this Hebrew word was comprehended the Trinity. But we

we ought to take care that the *Jews* and *Socinians* take not from thence occasion to blame us for interpreting of the Scripture rather according to our prejudices, than to the truth of the Text. *St. Jerom*, who knew that this was a way of speaking in the Hebrew, has in his Hebrew Questions upon *Geneses* drawn nothing from thence like this; and besides, the Grammarians bring other Examples of this Expression, for which they give several different Reasons from the Opinion of these Divines. But not to repeat what others have already said, I shall add, that it is ordinary for the Hebrews and Arabians to joyn a Noun Plural with a Verb Singular. We ought not therefore to search for any other Reason for this Expression than the Genius of the Hebrew Tongue; which in this differs not from the Greek, which often joyns Verbs Singular with Nouns Neuter in the Plural Number.

*Gen. 1. 1.* In the same Verse the Hebrew word, which usually is translated *Created*, the Septuagint have translated *Made*. The *Jews* and the Christians afterwards gave a peculiar Idea to the word to *Create*, which the Ancient Grammarians understood not. Nothing therefore but the Tradition which we have of the Creation of the World makes us give this signification to the Verb to *Create*, which signifies to make or form from any thing, as well as the Greek word of the Septuagint in this place. *R. Aben Esra* in his Commentary upon this place confutes some Jewish Translators; who make this word to signifie, *To produce out of nothing*, and at the same time shews by many Examples, that this is not the true signification of the Verb *Bara*, which signifies in the same Chapter to make or form; and therefore it cannot be properly us'd in the first sense, unless by relation to the matter there treated of.

*Gen. 1. 2.* In the second Verse, where we read in the Vulgar Translation *Terra erat inanis & vacua*, there are two Hebrew words which we know not the true and genuine signification of. The Septuagint have translated, *The Earth was invisible; and without order*, as if they alluded to the Chaos of the Ancients; and the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* seems to approve of this Translation, where he says, That the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

*Gen. 1. 2.* In the same second Verse, where the Vulgar has it, *Spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas*, the Interpreters, whether Jews or

*Hieron. in Quest. Heb. in Gen.*

*R. Aben Esra Com. in C. 1. Gen.*

*Epist. to the Heb. Chap. 11. 3.*

Christians, agree not how these words ought to be translated, because the Hebrew words are equivocal, and instead of translating it *the Spirit of God*, one may as well, and according to the Grammatical sense, translate it *a Wind of God*, that is to say, a great Wind blew upon the Waters. Thus *Onkelos* has in his *Chaldee* Paraphrase translated it, and the *Samaritan Interpreter* approves of this Translation. Besides, *Theodoret* in his Questions upon *Genesis* prefers this Translation before the former. I know that most Divines by these words understand the Holy Ghost; but they may perhaps favour a little too much their prejudices, and it is certain, that we cannot assuredly draw any such conclusion from the Grammatical sense. However it is, these two senses are equally probable.

In the same Verse, where we read in the Vulgar, as likewise in the Septuagint *Ferebatur*, most of the Modern Interpreters are of opinion with *St. Jerom* and some Rabbins, that it ought to be translated *Incubabat*. Nevertheless this last Translation seems to agree rather with the *Syriack* than the *Hebrew* Tongue. We know not for certain the signification of the Hebrew Verb; and this makes the difference in the Translations.

By these two first Verses of *Genesis* we may judge how hard it is to translate exactly the Hebrew Text of the Bible, and how doubtful the signification of the words is even in the Historical Books. There is equivocation in the most common terms, as in the fifth Verse of the same Chapter the Translators agree not about the proper signification of the words *Evening and Morning*. *Josephus* understood by these words what we in our Language understand by the words *Evening and Morning*. But *Sandias* understood by the *Morning* the whole day, and by the *Evening* all the night, which is the most probable opinion.

In the sixth Verse, where it is both in the Vulgar and Septuagint *Fixament*, most of the Modern Interpreters translate with the Rabbins *Extent*; which they explain to be this great and vast extent of Air above the Earth; this last Translation seems to be the best, and the other comes nearer the *Syriack* than the *Hebrew*. Nevertheless many very well maintain the first Translation: So difficult it is to find out the true signification of the Hebrew words.

I pass over Verse 11. where in the Vulgar we read *Herbam vi-* *rentem*, the Hebrew in this place has two words which both sig-

Rabbins. nise an Herb, and the Rabbins agree not what Herb is here spoken of. Some affirm, that the first word signifies all sorts of Herbs, or what we usually call Herbage, and that the second word signifies some particular Herb. Others affirm, that the first word signifies a young Herb, and that the other signifies a great Herb grown into seed: But all this is grounded only upon Conjectures.

Gen. 1. 21. It would also be to no purpose to search after the proper signification of the Hebrew word *Thamin* in the 21<sup>st</sup> Verse, which the Septuagint and Vulgar have translated *Cete*. It is severally translated according to the several places it is found in, as may be seen in *Bochartus's* Book concerning the Animals spoken of in the Scripture. There is nothing more uncertain than the Names of these Animals, which the *Jews* themselves at present understand not. They know not many Animals which they are either commanded or forbidden to eat of. This is a certain sign that they have but an imperfect tradition concerning their Language.

Gen. 1. 26. The Grammatical sense of the 26<sup>th</sup> Verse, where it is said, *Let us also make Man in our own Image according to our likeness*, is very difficult. For some *Jews* affirm, that it ought to be translated, *Let Man be made*, others, *I will make Man*, or *Let me make Man*, by changing of one Letter for another, as is usual in Hebrew. We must nevertheless acknowledge, that these two last Interpretations are far fetch'd, and condemn'd by the

Rabbins. most learned Rabbins. But suppose we admit of the ordinary Translation, we agree not for all that about the true sense of these words. Some *Jews* in the times of *St. Basil* and *St. Gregory of Nazianze* affirm, that God in this place spoke to his

S. S. Basil, Greg. Theodor. Angels. Other *Jews* in the time of *Theodoret* affirm'd, that God, according to the custom of great Persons, spoke in the Plural

Number, which is the common Interpretation amongst the *Jews* at present, and it has been receiv'd by some Christian Translators, who were of opinion, that God in this place, as well as in

other places of the Scripture, spoke according to the custom of Princes and Magistrates. However the most received Opinion amongst our Divines is, that by this Expression the Trinity is

spoke of, because many Fathers have maintain'd this Explanation, although *St. Jerom*, who understood the Hebrew Tongue, makes mention of no such thing in his Questions upon *Genesis*.

Mark

CHAP. IV.

Other Examples of the difficulties which will occur in the making of a good Translation of the Scripture.

THE second Chapter of *Genesis* has more difficulties than the first concerning the Grammatical sense of the Hebrew Text. I shall however touch only upon some Examples, whence we may easily judge how hard it is to translate the Bible.

I shall not stop at the first Verse, where the Vulgar and Septuagint have translated a word *Ornament*, which most of the Modern Interpreters translate *Hof*. Neither shall I stay at the second Verse, where the Vulgar translates according to the present Hebrew, *God ended his work on the seventh day*, whereas some Modern Interpreters have thought to make the sense more complete, it ought to be translated in the Preterplusperfect-tense *had ended*. As the Hebrew Tongue has not all the Tenses, the Greek, Latin, and most other Languages have, this is the reason why the sense of the Hebrew Text is very often obscure. And again, the Translators take a great deal of liberty sometimes in their Translations, under the pretence of the Hebrew's wanting some Tenses.

We need not go far to find Examples for what we here alludge; for in this same second Chapter of *Genesis* most of the Interpreters have chang'd the Preterperfect-tenses into the Preterplusperfect, to supply the want of order which there seems to be in the History of the Creation. For example, in the seventh Verse they translate, *God had created Man*, instead of *Created*. Which they have also done in the 18, 19, 20, 21 Verses of the same Chapter, and in several other places, as if the Historian resum'd his discourse after he had left. But it is to be fear'd, that the restoring of this Method is not their real intention, but that they have not sufficiently consider'd the manner of the collecting of the Holy Scriptures which are come to us, or the Style of the Holy Language, which delights in these sort of Repetitions.



Gen. 2. 3. In the third Verse of Chap. 2. where it is in the Vulgar, *Ab universo opere quod patrarat*, we ought in translating word for word from the Hebrew to say, *From all his work which he had created to make*. One cannot imagine how much the Rabbins and Modern Grammarians have troubled themselves to find out the Grammatical sense of this way of speaking, *to create to make, or in making*. But we need not stay upon these trifles. We may consult *Mercerus's Grammar* upon this place, where he sets down the different ways of translating the Hebrew words. To which we may add the observation of *Lewis of God* upon this same passage. All these different Translations of so small a thing as this is, sufficiently demonstrate how little knowledge we have at present of the Hebrew Tongue.

*Mercerus's*  
Comm. in  
Cap. 2. Gen.  
*Lewis of*  
God, ani.  
madv. in  
Cap. 2. Gen.  
Gen. 2. 4.

The fourth Verse of the same Chapter, where we read in the Vulgar, *Ista sunt generationes*, is yet more difficult, although the words are very plain and intelligible. It is doubtful whether we ought to translate, *These are the Generations*, and so they relate to what follows; or, *Those are the Generations*, and then they relate to what went before.

Gen. 2. 5. The following words of the fifth Verse are very hard, and the difficulty lies in a Hebrew word which the Vulgar has translated *Antequam*, and others *Nondum*. We may then translate this passage, *Every Plant of the Field before it was in the Earth*; that is to say, *Before that there was any Plant of the Field in the Earth*. If we follow this sense we must cut off an *&*, which is in the Hebrew, because this Conjunction is often superfluous as well in the Hebrew as in the Arabick. We may also translate it, *But there was not yet any Plant in the Earth*. It had nevertheless been already said, That the Earth brought forth the third day Grass and Herbs. We may see how those who have made Commentaries upon the scripture reconcile these two places which seem to contradict one another. My design is only to speak of the Grammatical sense, which is obscure, so that it is very difficult so to joyn the Hebrew words together as to find out the true sense.

Gen. 2. 6. In the sixth Verse, where the Vulgar has translated, *But a Fountain went up*, or as we may translate it according to the Letter, *And a Mist went up*: *Sandias Gaon* has in his *Arabian Paraphrase* contrarily translated it, *Nor went there up any Mist*. The *Geneva Translation* has also follow'd this last Interpretation as the most

natu-

natural. And *Grotius* thought that *Sandias* had had a different Hebrew Copy from what we have, in which he was mistaken. This variety of Translation proceeds only from the different way of translating the Hebrew Particle, which we usually translate by the Conjunction *&*. But when a Negative Particle goes before it, we may then translate it *neq* instead of *&*. This made *Sandias* translate negatively what the other Interpreters have translated in the Affirmative; and thus we ought not to explain this Expression by the diversity of the Hebrew Copies, there being other Examples of this kind in the Scripture.

To proceed, the Interpreters of the Bible translate nothing more oddly than this Particle we have just now spoken of. As the Hebrews have very few Particles in their Language, they make it sometimes serve for a Conjunction Copulative, sometimes for a Disjunctive, and sometimes otherwise. Every Interpreter has translated according to his Prejudices. For Example, in the Chap. 14. of *Genesis* and Verse 18. where the Vulgar translates, (in speaking of *Melchisedech*) *Sacerdos enim erat Dei*; *Calvin* blames this Translation as not agreeing with the Original. But we may as well translate it, *For he was the Priest of God*, as, *And he was the Priest of God*, as it is in the *French Geneva Translation*. The one Interpretation agrees as well with the Grammatical sense as the other. We can only know the true Sense by the Series of the Discourse.

I do not think it necessary to stay any longer upon this Subject, having already said enough to shew the great difficulty there is in the translating of the Scripture. If I should pick out some more difficult places, one might be the better convinc'd; but I shall rest satisfied with having given the beginning of the first Historical Books, to the end that by these first Books, which are the easiest, we may the better judge of the others which are more difficult, and where most of the words are so equivocal, that one has much ado to find out a compleat Sense, which plainly appears from the fourth Chapter of *Genesis*, and in the History of the Ark, as it is related in the Chap. 8. of the same Book, which is not so much perplext by reason of the Hebrew words, as because of some Repetitions of the same words, which very much confound the sense.

I shall not here take notice of the Style of the Prophecies, the sense of which is hard to be understood; not only because the

matter

Gen, 49. matter it self of these Books is usually obscure, but because the Expressions are very short, and there are few words but what are equivocal, as may be seen in the Prophecie of *Jacob*; and this is the reason of the great difference betwixt the Septuagint and Vulgar Translations of this place.

Exod. 32.4 We may farther add, That the transposition of words, which is usual in Scripture, often hinders us from finding out the true sense, and that the Translators make difficulties in some places where there are none. As in Chap. 32. *Exod.* Verse 4. where it is said, That *Aaron* having receiv'd the Golden Ear-rings and other Ornaments from the People, engrav'd the Gold with a Graving Tool, and made a Molten Calf. Most of the Interpreters are much perplext to find out the sense of these words; for say they, he could not polish the Calf with a Graving Tool which was not as yet made: and this has made some Rabbins translate the Hebrew word, which signifies a Graving Tool, a Purse, or little Sack; they say that *Aaron* ty'd this Gold into a Purse, and afterwards threw it into the fire to make a Calf. But without taking so much pains, one may only transpose the words, and then read, That he made a Molten Calf, and fashion'd the Gold with a Graving Tool. Then nothing will be more natural than this Interpretation, which *Bonfrerius* the Jesuite has judiciously observ'd in his Commentary upon this place; where he finds fault with *Oleaster*, who says, by these words are meant an Earthen Mould which *Aaron* had before made to cast his Brass in. But this Exposition, although it is approv'd of by many Interpreters, agrees not with the Hebrew words, which the Septuagint has translated according to the true sense. *Lombroso*, a learned Jew, who has also preferr'd it before all others, adds, That *Aaron* did a little engrave this Golden Calf to amuse the People till *Moses* should come down from the Mountain.

Were it not that I should be tedious in counting of each passage of the Scripture, I would treat of every particular Book of the Bible, and shew how hard it is to make a good Translation. But what I have already said sufficiently shews that the Protestants have no reason to say, that the Word of God contain'd in the Scripture is plain, and not at all intricate. In which they shew their ignorance, or rather the little pains they have took in finding out the difficulties which are in every Book of the Scripture. They have not observ'd that even the learnedest amongst

amongst the Jews almost every where doubt of the proper signification of the Hebrew words, and that the Dictionaries they have made of the Hebrew Tongue are almost full of nothing but Conjectures.

They were of the same opinion in the time of *St. Jerom*, who scrupled not with them to affirm, that most of the Hebrew words were equivocal; and what is very strange is, that *Luther*, after having laid aside the Fathers, Councils, and in a word, what ever might help to keep up a true Tradition in the Church, and apply'd himself wholly to the Books of the Scripture, has confess'd the Tongue in which these Books were first writ to be lost, and that there are very few words in this Language which are not equivocal, and may be interpreted several ways. But we have spoke enough concerning the difficulty of translating of the Holy Scriptures. Let us now see what Authors have explain'd them either by Notes or Commentaries.

## CHAP. V.

*A Judgment of the chief Authors who have expounded the Holy Scriptures, and first of the Jews. Their different ways of explaining the Scripture.*

WE are now to give Rules how to find out the true way of explaining the Holy Scriptures, and that we might the better succeed, I thought it was more proper to examine those Authors who had writ best upon this Subject, by observing both their failures and perfections, than to give a great many Rules which will not so much advantage us as a Critical History of the chief Writers, as well Jews as Christians, upon the Bible. Let us therefore begin with the Jewish Authors, and see what Method they have held in the expounding of the Old Testament.

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The *Jews* have differently explain'd the Holy Scriptures according to the different Times and Places. Although they have ty'd themselves up to the Literal Sense in their Disputes against the Christians, yet we find in their Commentaries upon the Bible nothing but Allegories, Quirks, pleasant Stories, and some Morality. They seldom endeavour to find out the Literal Sense; so much was their minds employ'd in inventing of Parables and Allegories, which were more pleasing to the People, than Literal Explanations, which could hardly keep their Auditors awake; besides, that we are more pleas'd in putting off our own Invention, than other Peoples, and a little Wit with some Invention was enough to make a Man be thought a great Doctor in this sort of Learning. Wherefore we have reason to neglect the Ancient Jewish Commentaries upon the Scripture, because they have nothing good in them, as the *Zohar*, *Medraschim*, or *Rabbot*, and some such Works which the *Jews* esteem because of their Antiquity, and some Christians have likewise valued them because they favour Christianity more than the Modern Commentaries of the Rabbins. But they consider not that these Allegorical Books contain many ridiculous Stories, and that they more plainly make out the Superstitions and Ceremonies of the *Jews*, than the Mysteries of our Religion. *William Postell* has impos'd upon many Divines in this Point, having pretended to prove Christianity from the Books of the *Zohar*, which are ancient Cabalistical Books, where the Law of *Moses* is allegorically expounded. But we may say both of the *Zohar* and Ancient *Medraschim* or Allegorical Jewish Commentaries what we say of the ancient Philosophers, especially the Platonists, and some Poets, who, if we believe *Augustine* of *Engubio*, and other Authors, understood the Mysteries of our Religion, and even that of the Trinity. As they have sometimes spoke of God in a very extraordinary manner, we have imagin'd things of them which they never thought of. Thus we find in the Allegorical Books of the *Jews* several ways of speaking, which may be apply'd to the Mystery of the Trinity, and to the coming of the Messiah, and it is easie for the *Jews* to turn it into other senses; for as much as any one may give what sense he pleases to most Allegories, as well as to Poetical Fictions.

*Zohar, Medraschim, Rabbot.*

*Postell.*

*Augustine of Engub. de Perenni Philos.*

As

As the Ancient Jewish Doctors have explain'd the Attributes of God according to the Platonists, it is impossible but they should sometimes come nigh our Expressions; but their Idea of this Mystery differs much from ours. Besides, it is certain that the *Jews* have always expected a Messiah; and therefore it is no wonder that he should be spoke of in many places which relate to our Doctrine. But because the Mystical Doctors take a great deal of liberty in the expounding of the Scripture, we ought not to rely upon their Interpretations, without some other Reasons, since we give little credit to our own contemplative Doctors, unless their Opinions be well ground'd. It is of dangerous consequence to draw Proofs for Religion out of Books which we despise in reading of them,

The Talmudists have also a Method of explaining the Scriptures much like that of the Allegorical Doctors; especially in the *Ghemara*, where they take more liberty than in the *Misna*, which is as the Text of the *Talmud*; to which the *Ghemara* serves as a Gloss or Commentary, and nothing is more ridiculous than these Glosses, which they ascribe to their Fathers, to the end they may more easily impose upon the People, under the pretence of giving them nothing but the pure Doctrine of their Ancestors. Although the *Misna* is more refin'd, the Passages of the Scripture are not often explain'd according to the Letter. They are made to agree with the prejudice of Translation to authorize the decisions of their Doctors, and indeed we must be very much byass'd to believe that the Authors of the Holy Scriptures ever thought of what they ascribe to them in their *Talmud*.

If the Scripture and Tradition were both equally from God, as the *Jews* affirm, we ought without doubt to prefer Tradition which explains the Mysteries clearly, before a Text fill'd with Ambiguities and Equivocations. But the *Jews* have invented many Stories, which they have adorn'd with the Specious Name of Tradition. We ought however to take notice, that in the Ancient Allegorical and Cabalistical Books there are many things to be taken allegorically; wherefore some Christians have not done them justice, in making those things appear ridiculous, as if they were to be took according to the Letter. We cannot however excuse the *Jews* for having inserted some impertinent Allegories. But let us leave these An-

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cient Jewish Doctors, and see whether the Modern ones have done better.

*Aben Esra  
Præf. Com.  
in Pentat.*

*Aben Esra*, whom the *Jews* commonly call the Wise, or Learned, speaks of five ways of interpreting the Scripture; the first belongs to them who express themselves at length upon every word, and make many digressions, filling up their Commentaries with whatsoever they know, whether Philosophy, Mathematicks, or any other Art: He brings for example a certain Rabbin call'd *Isaack*, who writ two Books upon the first Chapter of *Genesis*, *Suadias Gaon*, and some other *Jews*, who upon one word have made whole Treatises of Physick, Mathematicks, &c. *Aben Esra* finds fault with this way of expounding of the Scripture, because we ought to apply our selves wholly to the Interpretation of the Text, and treat of what belongs to Arts or Sciences in Books for that purpose.

*Isaack.  
Saadius  
Gaon.*

The second Method of explaining of the Scripture amongst the *Jews* differs much from the former, and this according to *Aben Esra* is us'd by the *Caraites*, which he calls *Sadducees*, who, as he says, look no farther than their own reason, without taking notice of Authority; he accuses also the Christians of this fault, as though they gave no credit to Tradition. This Method in *Aben Esra's* sense is an uncertain one, because Religion consists in things not to be discours'd by reason only: But we may observe, that he accuses both the *Caraites* and Christians without reason, for as much as both the one and the other disallow only ill grounded Traditions, as most of those in the *Talmud* are. I shall say nothing here of the Sect of the *Caraites* which *Aben Esra* reckons amongst the Heretical *Sadducees*; because I have already spoke of them. We cannot however deny but that those of this Sect rely sometimes too much upon their reason in Points of Religion. To proceed, when *Aben Esra* places the Christians in the Rank with them, he pretends that our Saviour ought not to have gone from the Tradition of his Fathers, and that he had no Authority to innovate any thing at all: But this is easie to be answer'd, for as much as most of the Jewish Traditions have no foundation. Besides, *Aben Esra* in his Commentaries upon the Scripture comes nigher the Method of the *Caraites* than that of the Fathers.

*Caraites.*

The third way of the *Jews* explaining the Scripture is observ'd by those who reduce all things to Allegories, and make every thing mysterious,

mysterious, without taking notice of the Literal Sense. *Aben Esra* *Aben Esra* utterly disallows of this Method, because it is dangerous to deviate from the Literal Sense, and not to follow exactly what is set down in the Text. He denies not however but there are places in the Scripture which are above the Literal Sense, as where the Circumcision of the Heart is spoke of; but however, this sense being literally explain'd is the true sense. He also confesses, that there are places which cannot be explain'd without acknowledging of some Mystery, as the Tree spoken of in the beginning of *Genesis*, whence proceeded the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

The Cabbalistic *Jews* use the fourth way of expounding of the Scripture, who draw from the sense of the Scripture idle and ridiculous Subtilties, consisting only in Quirks and Mysteries drawn from the Letters of the Hebrew Alphabet, Numbers, Words made after such and such a fashion. *Aben Esra* also wholly rejects this Method, which seems to have come from the Platonist to the Jewish Schools, especially in *Europe*, where many have writ upon this speculative Cabal which is much esteem'd of by the *Jews* of the Levant. The Book of *Zoar*, *Zoar* which the *Jews* believe to be very ancient, is full of this sort of Explanations, and this has made many *Jews* follow this Study without examining of it. There is another sort of Cabbale, which the *Jews* term practical, which is much more dangerous, and belongs to Magick. It is nothing but pure illusion and fancy of some People who think they can work Miracles by the help of this practical Cabbale. We may however observe, that *Aben Esra*, being a *Jew*, durst not wholly deny the Cabbale, although he was convinc'd of the unprofitableness of this Science; but he has circumscrib'd it within the compass of the Cabbale of the Ancients, and blames those who add new Fancies. In speaking of this Cabbale he advises not to rely much upon it, because it is not grounded upon the Text of the Scripture.

*Aben Esra.*

Lastly, The fifth way of explaining the Scripture consists in the diligent looking out of the signification of each word, and explaining of the passages as literally as possibly we can, without too scrupulously relying upon the *Massoret*, because the various Readings come often from the Transcribers, and not from the *Massorets*. *Aben Esra* says he has follow'd this Method in

*Aben Esra.*

his Commentaries upon the Scripture; and we have no other Jewish Author who has more literally and judiciously explain'd the Scripture than he. He sometimes plays too much the Grammarian, and was his Style not so short it would be better. And this has made some Jews write *Biurims*, or Explanations upon his Commentaries.

*Onkelos.* *Aben Esra* afterwards adds the Criticism of the Paraphrase of *Onkelos* upon the Books of *Moses*. He says, that this Author is generally exact in his Translation, and that he has discover'd to the Jews things which before were hid; that indeed he sometimes follows the Allegorical Sense, but it is designedly done, and in places where the greatest Blockheads may find out the Literal. Whence *Aben Esra* concludes, that the Scripture Text may be differently explain'd, and all the different ways not be contrary to the Literal Sense; so that when we find two Translations, one of which agrees with a certain Tradition of the Translators, we ought certainly to prefer that before the others, and not follow the Method of the *Caraites*, when they affirm that this Translation is contrary both to Scripture and Grammar.

These are the Rules which *Aben Esra* gives for the well expounding of the Scripture, and the Criticism of the Jewish Authors who have writ upon the Bible. There is nothing more reasonable than the Rules he gives, and I doubt not but the Christians will receive his Method. Although he values very much the Tradition of his Fathers, he approves not however of many of their Dreams which are scatter'd up and down in their Books, and in his Commentaries he endeavours to find out the most Natural and Literal Sense he can.

## CHAP. VI.

*Examinations of R. Moses's Rules for the well interpreting of the Scripture. The Method of other Rabbins upon the same Subject.*

**R** *Abbi Moses*, surnamed *Maimonides*, or the Son of *Maimon*, *Rambam*. is much esteem'd, not only amongst the Jews but Christians, who in their Works often quote a Book of his call'd *More ne Vocim*. The design of this Author is to clear the Scriptures, and to take away all Equivocations. Many Jews at first were against his Method, and condemn'd this Work, because by his way of reasoning he seems to destroy the Tradition of their Fathers. In a word, *R. Moses* has labour'd too much to shew himself a Philosopher, and has mixt the Principles of *Aristotle* with the Scripture, which cannot please all the World; his Metaphysics are too fine, and in inquiring out the signification of some Hebrew words, he seems to be no good Grammarian. Besides, he decides every thing according to his prejudice, which sometimes indeed agrees with the Maxims of his Religion: But he is very often intoxicated with the Philosophy of the *Arabians*, whose Books he had read.

He examines in the first Chapter of his Work the Hebrew words *Iselem* and *Demuth*, which signifie *Image* and *Resemblance*, and at the same time he explains these words, *Let us make Man in our Image after our own likeness*; where he observes, that many have from hence concluded, that God was really a Body, although he was a Body infinitely above ours; and the better to confute this Opinion, he says, that the Hebrew word *Iselem*, *Image*, signifies properly the Essential Form which causes any thing to be; and thus this passage is to be understood: But we have reason to doubt, that all the subtilties of Physick which he here relates are not well grounded.

Most of the Interpreters of the Scripture have been very nice upon these two Hebrew Words, whose signification they have endea-



endeavour'd to give, and the difference betwixt *Iselem* and *Demuth*; but without being so very curious, we may say, that they both signifie the same thing, and that by them we may understand Sensible and Exterior Forms; as well as Insensible and Essential ones. The matter only which is treated of must direct us to the sense, and it is the same with most other Hebrew words, whose true significations if we would know, we must first understand the Proprieties of the Subject spoken of. Which depends much upon the Idea which we have of things by the help of Theology; and therefore it is impossible to explain the Scriptures without relation to the Notions of Religion, which we have received by tradition.

*Gen. 3. 5.* Upon this Principle *R. Moses* explains these words of the Chap. 3. of the same Book, *Ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil*: It was objected to him, that the Literal Sense of these words seem'd to be, that before the first Man had sin'd, he differ'd not from other Animals, and had no more knowledge than them; but that after he had sin'd, he acquir'd what we call Understanding, and the Faculty of discerning Good from Evil. *Rabbi Moses* in answering of this difficulty shews, that Man was created with a perfect Understanding, and so that what is said, that the Eyes of the first Man were opened, and that he saw that he was naked, is to be understood of the Eyes of the Mind, and not of those of the Body. He then attain'd to a new Light to discern what was convenient from what was not, and he understood what he had lost, having learnt to distinguish Good from Evil; before his sinning his nakedness did not seem unbecoming, as afterwards it did.

As then most of the Hebrew words are equivocal, we ought necessarily to understand all the different significations; and then we may apply which seems more proper for the matter treated of. But we cannot understand the different significations of every word, but by long studying of the Language, and by comparing of the different places where we find these words; and besides, the understanding of the sense depends much upon the Notions we have receiv'd from Religion: The Rules in the two following Chapters of *R. Moses* are very easie, and relate only to some equivocations of words, which may be easily understood, if we consider the things spoken of. It is a general Maxime, that in all Tongues there are many things, and but few

few words; *res sunt infinita, voces finita*, and therefore we ought to take notice of the matter treated of. Wherefore *R. Moses* *Rambam* has judiciously observ'd in the Chap. 5. of his Book, that to find out the true sense of the Scripture we ought to study a long time, and divest our selves of all usual prejudices. But he perceives not, that under pretence of divesting himself of all usual prejudice, he has burd'ned his mind with subtile Principles of Metaphysics which he learn'd from the *Arabian Philosophers*.

It is easie by the help of Hebrew Dictionaries and Concordances *Rambam*. to supply the defects of the Remarks of *R. Moses* in the First Part of this Work, where he explains the proper significations of several words according to the places they are found in. He pretends indeed not to follow a Grammatical Method; but whatever he can say of the Grammarians, it belongs properly to their Art to explain the equivocal words, which *R. Moses* in the first part of his Book wholly applies himself to, mixing now and then something of Philosophy with Divinity. He had done well if he had not made so many digressions, but had ty'd himself up close to his Subject. There was also no necessity for him to explain many words not at all difficult. Which is wholly contrary to his design, since he professes he would speak only of those things which might perplex the Reader.

In Chap. 26. of this first part of his Work, he lays down for a General Rule, That the Scripture speaks according to the Language of Men; and for this reason there are many Proprieties attributed to God which agree only with Bodies and Beings less perfect than God. Thus Rest and Motion are ascrib'd to God. He commends *Onkelos*, because in places of the Law where God is spoke of as Bodies are, he makes use of Expressions which suit better with the Greatness of God; for example, instead of *Motion* he uses the word *Apparition*; and he does not say, that *the Lord came down*, but that *the Lord appear'd*. He farther adds, That indeed *Onkelos* makes use of these same words which denote motion, but he does it only in things which have happened in Visions, and not in true Histories; because then these Expressions include nothing of reality. *R. Moses* in his first part runs very much upon the perfections of God, because that gives great help for the understanding of many places of the Scripture: And we may observe, that the *Jews* and *Arabians* express very well

well the Unity of God, and other his Attributes or Proprieties. They have nevertheless been too nice upon this Subject, being inclin'd to Metaphysicks.

Rambam  
More Neu  
Part.  
C. 21.

The same Rabbin confesses in Chap. 21. of the first part, that those of his Nation have lost the knowledge of many things which might be useful in the clearing of the difficulties of the Scripture. As the *Jews* published not in writing the Explanation of their Law, but were contented with Tradition *viva voce*, they have not been able to preserve almost any of their Mysteries; and what they pretend to have preserved in their *Talmud*. and Ancient Allegorical Commentaries, is not altogether certain.

Rambam.  
cap. 30.

In the second part of his Work he speaks only of things belonging to Physicks and Metaphysicks. His Explanation of the Creation of the World is very extraordinary, and he there shews more cunning than solidity, he also speaks of Prophecy, and of the different degrees thereof; but throughout his whole discourse there is nothing but Philosophical Subtilties, and besides that, he is much prejudic'd in favour of the Law of *Moses*, which he affirms is to last for ever. He assures us, that as often as the Apparitions of Angels are spoke of in the Law, they are not to be expounded according to the Letter, but of a Vision or Dream, wherein Prophecy consists. Thus he interprets the Apparition of the Angels to *Abraham* in the Plains of *Manre*, The wresting of *Jacob* with the Lord, the History of *Baalani*, where it is said that the *As* spoke, and many other Apparitions which we usually explain according to the Historical sense. He is not the only one who explains the Apparitions spoken of in the Scripture after this manner, for besides that he is back'd with the Authority of a certain Rabbin called *Hain*, several other Rabbin have followed this exposition, even amongst the *Caraites*, who interpret the Scripture exactly according to the Letter.

Chap. 42.

Gen. 18. 1.

Hain.

He also affirms that the Actions ascrib'd to the Prophets are not real, but were only done in visions or dreams; as where they speak of the journeys they made from one place to another, of the time they spent, and other things which they affirm they had done. Which he proves by several examples of the Scripture. But it is to be feared, he stretches the Parabolical sense too far and under pretence that there are Parables in the Prophecies, he destroys the literal sense.

Lastly,

Lastly, In the Third Part of his Book, he explains the Chariot *Zechiel* according to the Rules of Mystical Theology; but I think it not necessary to dwell upon these Subtilties, nor upon the Rabbin's conjectures upon this subject. He afterwards speaks of several Philosophical Matters which are of no use in the Interpretation of the Scripture. What is most remarkable in this last part of *R. Moses's* Book is the History of the *Sabbaites*, which he has had from the *Arabian* Doctors. As we have already spoke hereof in the First Book of this Criticism, it is not necessary we should stay any longer hereupon. This is in few words the Method which *R. Moses* thought ought to be observ'd in the explaining of the Scripture, which many *Jews*, especially those who have applied themselves to Philosophy, have since follow'd. We cannot deny but he has introduc'd many things wholly new; and that tho he has abridg'd the *Talmud*, and writ Commentaries upon the *Misna*, he has wholly deviated from the way which the Ancient *Talmudists* observ'd in expounding of the Scriptures. Which was the reason that many *Jews* of his time stiffly oppos'd the Publishing of this work, which seem'd wholly to destroy the Religion of their Father's by Innovations grounded only upon Metaphysical Subtilties.

As then it is not necessary to treat of all the Jewish Methods of expounding of the Bible; I shall content my self with speaking only of the principal Rabbin who have writ upon this Matter. I have already observ'd that we ought to prefer the *Caraites* Commentaries before all others, because those of this Sect stick close to the literal sense, and are not carried away with many ridiculous Traditions. We may reckon *Aben Ezra* amongst the *Caraites* because of his Method, altho he falls foul upon them in his Commentaries. *R. D. Kimbi* apply'd himself also to the literal sense of the Scripture, and his Commentaries would have been less tedious, if they had not had so many Quirks of Grammar. *R. Salomon Isaac*, commonly call'd *Jarki* is indeed more a Divine, and has shun'd these little Niceties of Grammar, but on the other side he is much prejudic'd in favour of the *Talmud*, and his Divinity is more proper for *Jews* than *Christians*.

The Commentaries of Rabbi *Levi Ben Gerson* are much more cunning than solid; and as he was a Philosopher, they are full of Philosophy; he wrests sometimes to other sense the Miracles

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which are in the Scripture, and he has, as well as R. Moses, Compos'd a Book which is full of Metaphysical Notions, under the Name of *Milhamet Hassem*, the Wars of the Lord, which I have heard some Jews call *Milhamot Alfem*, the Wars against the Lord; because they affirm, there is nothing more contrary to the Religion of their Fathers than these Philosophical Subtleties. In a word, R. Levi in his Commentaries upon the Scripture, observes the Method of R. Moses, having gone beyond him in Metaphysical Notions. He has also added Moral Reflections to his Commentaries upon the *Pentateuch*.

Rambam.

Rambam, that is to say R. Moses Son of Nahman in his Commentaries upon the Law of Moses, has only studied how to make his sense agree with the Divinity of his Fathers, and the Principles of the Cabbal. However he sometimes follows the Letter, and plays the Grammarian; but he endeavours much more to explain the Ancient *Medrasims*, or allegorical Commentaries, and Opinions of his Ancestors, than to look out the literal sense. Wherefore his Books are more fit to instruct Jews than Christians.

R. Bahai.

R. Bahai, or Bahie has very curiously writ large Commentaries upon the Five Books of Moses, wherein he sets down the Literal, Allegorical, and Cabalistic sense. There is in this Book a great deal of Jewish Learning, and he enlarges sometimes upon the Opinions of the Philosophers. Many profitable things might be collected out of this Book; but it would take up a great deal of time to read it, as most other of the Jews Books do.

Don Isaac  
Abravanel.

We may in my Opinion reap more advantage in the Translating of the Scripture from Don Isaac Abravanel, than from any other Jew. He has writ in an elegant style and easie to be understood, altho he is too Copious, and sometimes in his Writing, he affects Rhetorick more than a true Translation of the Bible. He usually in his Commentaries gives the Exposition of some other Rabbins, which he sometimes examines, and speaks his Opinion very freely, his Method is nevertheless tedious, because he asks many Questions which he afterwards resolves, as may be seen in his Commentaries upon the *Pentateuch*, *Joshua*, *Judges*, the Books of *Samuel* and *Kings*. We may nevertheless observe that he is often too nice upon the Expositions of other Rabbins, and that in several places he is too subtle. We have also his Commentaries upon all the Prophets, whereof a New Edition has been

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Printed in *Holland*. He has since writ a separate Treatise upon the Book of *Daniel*, whom the Jews reckon not amongst the Prophets, although they confess there are several Prophecies in this Book.

R. Mardochai the Son of Eliezer Comtino a Constantinopolitan Jew has made a literal Commentary upon the Books of Moses, and uses all means possible for the finding out the sense of the Text. he quotes for the most part the best Rabbins, and chiefly *Aben Ezra*, so that the reading of this Commentary is useful for the understanding the Holy Scripture.

I shall not speak here of a great many other Rabbins who have also Commentated upon the Scripture; because most of these Authors wholly spend their time in Allegories, in mystical and hidden senses, in the Subtilties of a ridiculous Cabal, or in Morality, useful only to the Jews; I reckon amongst these sort of Books the Commentary of R. Abram-Seba upon the *Pentateuch*, where he enlarges particularly upon Morality, and Allegories. Besides there are more Jewish Niceties than solidity and good sense in the Commentaries of R. Moses Negara. The Commentaries of Samuel Laniado upon the Books of Moses are nothing but a parcel of Allegories woven together, one had need be much at leisure to read the long Commentaries which R. Isaac Ben Arama has writ upon the Law, being fill'd with nothing but Allegories, and Jewish Morality. Neither am I of opinion that we ought to busie our selves in reading the Commentaries of R. Joel Ben-Soeb upon the Books of Moses, which contain nothing but Questions and Disputes. It is more proper for the Jews than Christians to read *Moses Alshech*, because this Author has comprehended in his Commentary most of the sense of the Scripture, whether it be literal or Allegorical, or Mystical and Cabalistic.

In a word there are very few Jewish Books which are of use to the Christians for the understanding of the Holy Scripture, except some few who have apply'd themselves to find out the literal sense. We cannot relish their Allegories, and some of their Morality. Besides those I have formerly spoken of which may be of use to us in the understanding of the Bible, we may yet add a certain Jew call'd *Lombroso*, who Printed an Hebrew Bible with some little remarks purely literal, which he usually joyns with the Explanation of the Hebrew Text in *Spanish*. This Author is for the most part Judicious in his choice, and we may see at

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R. *Aben-Melec.*

once the Interpretation of the most difficult places in the Scripture, especially as to the Grammatical sense. We may add to this Rabbin another literal Commentary of *Aben-Melec* upon the whole Bible, where he has Collected in short in a Book Intituled *Miclol Jophi*, what he found most conducing toward the understanding the Scripture in the Works of the Jewish Grammarians, especially in the Books of the Rabbins *Judas, Jona, Aben-Ezra* and *Kimhi*.

We ought doubtless to prefer these later Jewish Authors who have carefully apply'd themselves to find out the literal sense of the Scripture, before an infinite number of other Rabbins whose Books are fill'd with nothing but Allegories, and pleasant Stories fit to stir up the Reader's Attention: and for this reason we ought to value the great Bibles of *Venice* and *Basle*, where are only inserted the Rabbins Commentaries, which explained the Text according to the literal sense, excepting *Baal Haturim's* Commentary, which contains only Allegories and Cabbalistic Explanations. It would have been, methinks, more proper to have substituted in this Author's place R. *Aben Melec's* Abridgement just now spoken of.

Mean while for the better understanding wherein consists these kind of Allegorical and Cabalistic Explanations, which are so pleasing to the *Jews*, I will here speak of the Interpretation which *Baal Haturim* gives the first words of *Genesis*, as this Author did only collect the Opinions of the Ancient Rabbins, we shall see in brief the Method of the Cabbalistic *Jews* in their Commentaries upon the Holy Scripture.

R. *Baal Haturim.*

R. *Jacob Baal Haturim* begins his Allegorical Commentary upon *Genesis*, by observing with some Ancient Allegorical Doctors, that the first Letter of that Book is a *Beth* and not an *Aleph*, because the Letter *Beth* is a token of Benediction, whereas the Letter *Aleph* is a sign of Malediction. He afterwards adds, that the Letter *Beth* in this place signifies the two Worlds which God has created, viz. This here, and the World to come. The third Explanation which he makes is, that by this Letter which is the second in the Alphabet there are two Laws to be understood: to wit, the written and the oral Law, that we might know that the World has been Created in favour of the Law, and for those who learn it.

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It would be to no purpose for us to dwell upon these Niceties, which can be of no use for the understanding of the Scriptures, altho the *Jews* pretend by their help to find out the obscurest things in their Law; as by these first words of *Genesis Berescit*, they prove that the world was created the First day of the Month *Tisri* or *September*, because it seems in these words *Berescit* there is the Letter *Aleph*, which signifies One or the First, and *Betisri*, that is to say, *Tisri* or *September*, only by transposing the Order of the Letters, and by another transposition of the same Letters, there is in *Berescit*, *Barascete*, which signifies *he created two*, because God created two Laws; but to avoid being troublesome, I pass over many other such-like Expositions, which R. *Jacob Baal Haturim* mentions, according to the different rules of the Cabbal.

The *Jews* have another way of explaining the Scripture, by relation to their Laws and their Morality, which might be of greater use than that of the Cabbalistic Doctors, but there is generally so much Superstition in these kind of Commentaries, that they are hardly fit for any but the *Jews*, who from their Childhood have had a world of Prejudices in favour of their Religion instill'd into them. Which is the reason that they do more readily give credit to idle fancies of their Doctors. These Moral Explanations mingled with Allegories, are very pleasing to their *Darshanim* or Preachers, who spread them abroad among the People, adding withal some other Conceits, the better to shew the sharpness of their wit.

R. *Simeon* to whom they commonly give the title of *Ros Ha-darshanim* or the chief Preacher, was very excellent in this way of Writing in his Book, intituled; *Falcut Hatora*, which is nothing else but a Collection of the Moral Allegorical Explanations of the Jewish Doctors upon the Bible. This Collection is so far useful, in that a man may see in a small time the different ways of the Ancient *Jews* explaining of the Scripture in the *Talmud* in the Books of *Siphri, Tanhuma, Mecilta*, and in a word in all the old *Talmud Siphri Tanhuma, Mecilta, Medrasim*, or Allegorical Commentaries; But these kind of works are only serviceable to the Jewish Preachers, and being wholly unuseful for the literal sense of the Scripture, we have no occasion to speak farther about them.

There are other Jewish Books upon the Scripture, call'd *Biu-blurim* or *Explanation*, because they were indeed compos'd for the explaining of the most difficult places of the Commentaries of the other:

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other Rabbins upon the Bible. They have Printed several of these *Biurim* or Explanations upon the Commentaries of *Raschi*, and of *R. Aben Ezra*; but they differ in goodness, inasmuch as some instead of explaining succinctly and clearly the difficulties of the Author upon which they have writ their *Biurim*, enlarge very much upon whatsoever comes in their way. *R. Elias Mizrahi* or *Levantin*, took this Method in the Volume of Explanations which he made upon the Commentaries of *Raschi*; but it can be of no use for any but the *Jews*, because he has not well chose the Matters he should explain. There is another Book of *Biurim*, or Explanations upon the Commentaries of *Raschi* concerning the Law, which is too much abridg'd, and altho the Author of this *Biurim* has apply'd himself chiefly to the explaining the difficulties which are in the Text of *Raschi*, he does nevertheless treat of little Trifles. *R. Samuel Tarsa*, who has writ a good large Volume, wherein he explains the difficult passages which occur in *Aben-Ezra's* Commentaries upon the *Pentateuch*, has sped much better than the two former Rabbins. He apply'd himself to the unfolding the literal sence of the Scripture, by explaining as much as in him lay the proper signification of the Hebrew words. He wrests nevertheless in some places the true sence of his Author, the better to accommodate it to the receiv'd Opinions amongst the *Jews*.

But I am afraid I have enlarg'd too much upon a Subject which perhaps will not please every body; and whereas there are but very few Divines who are able to read the Rabbins Books, I cannot well tell wherein they can be useful for the well understanding the Scripture.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Whether we ought to allow of the Reading of the Rabbins in the Tongue wherein their Books are Written.

*Mariana*, who has made a particular Chapter about the Books of the Rabbins in his Treatise of the Vulgar, tells us, That in his time this Question was very much discuss'd in *Spain*, whether we ought to allow of the Reading of the Rabbins, and especially their Commentaries upon the Bible. Many were of opinion that their Memory ought wholly to be rooted out; because the benefit we could reap thereby was very inconsiderable, and that on the contrary there was nothing so dangerous and opposite to the Truths of the Christian Religion, as these sort of Books, and that we had found by Experience, that those who apply'd themselves to the study of the Rabbins, did usually despise the Explanations of the Fathers, as if they had related nothing in their Commentaries and their Homilies but vain Allegories, which had no other Foundation but the fruitfulness of their Imagination. Notwithstanding all these Objections, and many others which I pass over, this Learned Jesuit approves the Opinion of those who allow the reading of the Rabbins, because of the benefit we may thence reap for the understanding the Holy Scripture. The better to confirm this, he produces the Example of *St. Jerom*, whom *Ruffinas* heretofore blam'd, as at that time they also in *Spain* were blam'd who read the Rabbins Books. In short *Mariana* writ more at large in the same place of the advantages which one may receive from the reading of the Rabbins, and tho I be not altogether of his Opinion, I am nevertheless perswaded that a great deal of help may be had from the Commentaries which some Learned Rabbins have made upon the Scripture.

After we have spoken of the most famous Rabbins who have written Commentaries upon the Bible, it will not be unnecessary to say something of the Tongue in which these Commentaries



taries are writ, and which we call the Hebrew of the Rabbins. As the Books of the Holy Scripture do not contain all the words which are necessary to speak of all manner of things, the *Jews* have been oblig'd to seek out some help elsewhere. For this reason the Rabbinical Hebrew consists of the Hebrew words in the Bible; but they have much extended the signification of these words, by applying to them many Significations, and especially those which they have taken from the Neighbouring Tongues; for Example from the *Arabick* and from the *Chaldean*.

Besides these two Tongues which have much advantag'd the Rabbinical Hebrew, the *Jews* have also borrowed several things from the Nations with whom they have liv'd. And this is the reason why we find in the Rabbins Books many *Greek*, *Latin*, *French*, and *Spanish* words; So that to understand perfectly the Rabbinical Hebrew, we ought to know all these Tongues. And what is yet more inconvenient is, that the Rabbins sometimes have made use of words, whether *French* or *Spanish*, which are now out of use.

As it is not enough for the making of a Language to have barely words, but we ought besides to link them together, it was necessary for them to invent Prepositions, Particles, Articles, Conjunctions, and several other such little things which they have also borrow'd from other Tongues, deviating however as little as possibly they could from the stile of the Bible, especially they who have writ with any Art; I speak not here of the Ancient Jewish Drs. of *Palestine* and other places where the *Chaldee* has been spoke, because their Books are writ in barbarous *Chaldee*, which is understood but by very few Persons. Lastly, we may say that the Rabbinical Hebrew, besides the Construction it has, which is common to other Languages, has yet another proper to it self, and which cannot be learnt but by long use, and the daily reading of the Rabbins, who have given particular Declinations to their words as well as Verbs.

We may perhaps wonder that from so barren a Tongue as the Hebrew, which is contained in the Books of the Old Testament, the *Jews* should have made so Copious a Language as the Rabbinical Hebrew now is, one would think it to be a great piece of Rashness to undertake, to write upon all Subjects in a Tongue which has so few words. Nevertheless the Rabbins have treated almost

almost upon every particular Science, they have Translated most of the Ancient Philosophers, Mathematicians, and Physicians. We find the Books of *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Gallen*, *Avicen*, and *Averroës*, and several others Translated into Rabbinical Hebrew. They have also Poets and Rhetoricians, altho' they have never been excellent either in Poesie or Rhetorick, nor even in History nor Chronology; They have writ much better in Divinity, which they have however chang'd by mixing the Philosophical Principles of *Plato*, and *Aristotle*, and especially of this last, since they have Translated some *Arabick* Books into Rabbinical Hebrew.

I know that they who understand the Genius of the Hebrew Tongue will have much ado to believe that the *Jews* could write in this Tongue upon so many different Subjects; But if we seriously read their Books, we shall find a great many Rabbins have writ very well in their own Tongue. For Example, *R. Isaac Abravanel* has as much clearness and Eloquence in Rabbinical Hebrew, as *Tully* has in Latin. The stile of *R. Moses Son of Maimon* is as fine and neat in its kind as *Quintus Curtius's* is; The Sentences of *R. Aben Esra* are very like to *Salust's*. Lastly, Altho' this Tongue is full of Foreign words, nevertheless the best Author's Books have their particular Grace, and it is not impossible to reduce this Tongue to Art, altho' some Learned Men who have not thoroughly studied it, have been of a contrary Opinion. Let us now pass from the Synagogue to the Church, and see what Method the Fathers have follow'd in interpreting of the Holy Scriptures.

## C H A P. VIII.

*The Method of the first Fathers in the Explaining of the Scripture. St. Augustine's Rules for the Interpreting of the Bible examin'd.*

**I**T appears not that the first Fathers Interpreted the Scripture according to the exact literal sense. As they were oblig'd to Dispute either against Philosophers or *Jews*, they made use of Reason rather than Scripture to convince the former, and against the others they disputed according to the *Idea* which they had received of the Christian Religion. Thus they apply'd the proofs they brought against the *Jews* out of the Holy Scriptures, and they consider'd rather the Mystical Explanations, than the Grammatical or literal sense, which they thought agreed only with the Synagogue. So likewise it is much more easie to find out the Truth of Christianity by these Mystical Interpretations of the Fathers, than by the literal Explanations of the Grammarians, who indeed explain the History of the Old Testament, but they do not sufficiently make appear the Religion.

The Fathers have imitated the Apostles in their Allegories, altho' we must prefer the Allegories of the one before the other. We ought then rather to search after the Truth of Christianity in the Commentaries of the first Fathers upon the Scripture, than in a literal Explanation of the Text of the Bible; There are nevertheless some who have endeavour'd it, and have given pretty plausible Rules, but they could never put these Rules in practice, it being so very difficult to explain the Scripture according to the Letter, without flying to the Allegorical sense. We may find in *St. Augustin's* Works many excellent Rules for the understanding of the literal sense of the Bible, and especially in his Books of the Doctrine of Christianity, where he has Collected what he thought was necessary upon this Subject. I shall give here an Abridgment thereof, with some Observations

tions thereupon, that we may understand the Method which the most Learned Fathers thought ought to be observ'd for the understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

This Father then, after he has suppos'd that the reading of the Scripture is not absolutely necessary for a Christian, and that many live very well in the *Deserts* without the help of these Holy Books, Treats at large of the Nature of the different signs which we have given us, thereby to explain things. And as words are the chief of those signs, he speaks of the diversity of Tongues, and he supposes at first that the Scripture is obscure and hard to be understood. He nevertheless adds, that what is obscure in one place, usually is more clearly explain'd in another; and that what relates to Faith or Manners, is more fully explain'd than any thing else in the Bible. He afterwards lays down for a *Maxime*, That we ought seriously to study the Tongue the Holy Scriptures are writ in, and make it as familiar to us as we can; for as much as by this Knowledge we may at last understand the most obscure places. He would however have us to express the most intricate terms by those that are easie, and above all things to distinguish betwixt Proper and Metaphorical terms.

The same *St. Augustin* judiciously observes, that the understanding of Latin is not sufficient for the reading of the Latin Bible; we ought besides that to understand both the Greek and Hebrew Tongues, that we may go to the Originals when we meet with any Difficulties in the Latin. In a word, it had been impossible to have corrected the Vulgar Translation according to the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, without perfectly understanding of these two Tongues, and it is impossible for them to have well succeeded who have made Commentaries upon the Bible without them. He approves however of the many Latin Translations which there were in his time of the Scripture, because it may be that what is obscurely set down in one, may be more clearly express'd in another; and thus by comparing of several Translations, we may more easily discover which is the true one.

*Gregory* the Great made use of this Rule in his Commentaries upon *Job*, where he sometimes leaves the Ancient Latin Edition made from the *Septuagint*, and follows *St. Jerom's* new Translation from the Hebrew, which he look'd upon to be the better. We ought however to take notice that this Rule may very often

deceive us, and that if we understand not Greek and Hebrew, thereby to judge of the goodness of Translations, we may easily fall into an Error. St. *Augustin* has nevertheless well observ'd, that when a word is obscure or equivocal in one Translation, that may be clear'd by another, which uses a plainer word to express the same thing. But this is only useful to those who understand not the Tongues in which the Bible has been writ, and they cannot be assur'd they make the best choice. Wherefore St. *Augustin* in the same place says, That when the Translators differ, we cannot be assur'd of the true sense but by going to the Originals. So that according to him it is absolutely necessary for us to understand the Greek and Hebrew Tongues, if we will understand truly the Holy Scriptures. In short, if he had understood Hebrew, he would easily have reconcil'd the different Translations which he brings of a passage of *Isaiab*, in speaking of this last Rule, whereas he is indeed too nice, and meddles not at all with the Difficulty. He has succeeded better in the other Examples which he cites in the same place; and he plainly shows how apt they are to mistake who explain the Bible without understanding of the Greek and Hebrew Tongues. Equivocations are so usual in every Tongue that

St. *Augustin* has concluded it necessary for us to consult the Originals in their own proper Tongue, to avoid being mistaken in the Explanation of words.

St. *Augustin* Lib. 2. De Doct. Chr. C. 12, & 13.

The understanding of the Tongues, is not according to this Father alone sufficient, we ought also to have correct Copies.

Chap. 14. *Codicibus emendandis primitus debet invigilare solertia eorum qui scripturas divinas nosse desiderant.* But there are few persons who understand this Criticism, and it very often happens that under pretence of Correcting the faults of a Book, we make others. We have already shown how we may Correct the Hebrew Text of the Bible, and the chief Translations. St. *Augustin* lays down this Maxim, That if we find any fault in the Latin Translation of the Old Testament, we ought to go to the Greek *Septuagint* from whence it was made; and as for the New Testament we ought not to doubt but that the Greek Copies are better than the Latin Translation. In a word, he says we ought always to go to the Originals; He nevertheless excepts the *Septuagint*, because he thought with the other Fathers that the Greek Interpreters being truly Prophets might change many things

Chap. 15.

things which are not to be reform'd by the Original Hebrew, since they did it by the Direction of the Holy Ghost; *Etiam si aliquid, sicut in Hebraeis exemplaribus invenitur, quam isti posuerint, cedendum esse arbitror divine dispensationi, quae per eos facta est.* And many however at present allow not of this Maxim; and St. *Augustin* himself in other places makes no Scruple to Correct the *Septuagint* by the Hebrew. Besides St. *Jerom* long since would not allow the 70 Interpreters to be Prophets.

Besides the true and Grammatical signification of each word, Ch. 16. St. *Augustin* is of opinion that we ought to understand several things, and that for Example we ought not to be ignorant of the Nature of Animals, Stones, and Plants, *Rerum ignorantia*, says he, *facit obscuras figuratas locutiones.* This Principle is very true, but it is hard to have a perfect knowledge of these things, and besides the *Jews* themselves understand not the signification of most of these words. He also adds that we ought to understand the Nature of Numbers, that we may the better know what they mean in the Scripture. Lacknowledge there are sometimes Mysteries in these Numbers, but they have caus'd Interpreters to give Allegorical Sences, which are of no use for the understanding of the Literal Sense. They often neglect the Literal Sense to follow these sort of Mysteries. St. *Augustin* who understood very well the Platonick Philosophy, was herein faulty, and this appears even in this very place. He affirms, That we ought also to understand Musick; but the Examples he brings relate more to the Allegorical than Literal Sense. It is however certain that the Knowledge of Arts and Customs is necessary for the well understanding of the Scripture, as we have already observ'd. Wherefore St. *Augustin* had reason to say, That we ought not to neglect all things hereto relating which we find in Prophane Authors. In a word, Hiern. there is nothing more useful in the explaining of the Bible, especially the Books of the Prophets, than Prophane History. So St. *Jerom* thought that without this help it was impossible to explain the Prophecy of *Daniel*. St. *Augustin* inveighs here very much against the Mathematicians, whose Science he Condemns as Vain and Superstitious, which however is only to be understood of Judicial Astrology, and not of Astronomy, or the Motion of the Stars; which is a very necessary Science.

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Under the Notion of Arts, which St. *Augustin* thinks are necessary to be known for the understanding of the Scripture, he comprehends Mechanicks, which indeed are of great use; especially for the Books of the Old Testament. He Treats also very largely of Logick, which he assures us is of great help for the clearing of the Difficulties in the Scripture. This Principle is very good, but we must have a care of abusing of it, and of giving our Opinions for Articles of Faith drawn immediately from Scripture. This the Enemies of St. *Augustin* have blam'd him for, accusing him of keeping too close to the Rules of Logick; as if there was more Subtilty than Solidity in his Works.

The Obscurity of the Scripture may likewise proceed according to St. *Augustin* from the different ways of distinguishing the parts of Discourse. As the *Points* and *Comma's* were Invented by the Grammarians, and not by the Authors of the Holy Scriptures, nor by those who have Translated them, every one might make these sort of Distinctions as he pleas'd. We have already in the First Book of this Work largely Treated of the first Invention of these distinctions in the Hebrew Text. St. *Augustin* gives us some Examples in the Translations; and adds, that to make a right Sence we must have recourse to the Rule of Faith, *Consultat regulam fidei* *quam de Scripturarum planioribus locis & Ecclesie auctoritate percepit.* If it happens that the Distinction of *Points* and *Comma's* makes nothing against Religion, and there is nothing in the Text to incline us to one sence rather than another, we may then mark these Distinctions as we think fit, *Tales distinctionum ambiguitates in potestate legentis sunt.* St. *Augustin* in the same place gives other Examples of things which render the Scripture Sence obscure; but if we understand the Grammar but never so little, we may easily find out these difficulties; and for the more easie discovering of them, he lays down this general Rule, That we ought at the end of the Discourse to compare the different Translations, and consult the Original Tongues.

This last Rule is only useful when the words are in their true Signification. Wherefore he says, it is much more difficult when the words are in a Metaphorical Sence, *Cavendum est,* says he, *ne figuratam locutionem ad literam accipies;* and he calls them dull Fellows who Explain literally what ought to be Expounded

*August.*  
Lib. 3. C. 2.

Chap. 5.

figura-

figuratively; He Treats at large of these figurative Expressions, and then adds, That on the contrary we ought to take care of explaining figuratively what is express'd in its Proper and Natural Signification. To conclude, we are to take care that for fear of appearing dull we flye not too often to Allegories and figurative Sences.

Cardinal *Perron* has observ'd that St. *Augustin* delighted in these sort of Allegories, and under pretence, says the Cardinal speaking of St. *Augustin*, That *He was a sort of Wit, who the better to show the neatness of his Inventions, and to stir up the desire of his Auditors, sported with them by jestings and Allegorical Meditations, without destroying, as Origen had done, the Literal Sence; but sometimes concealing of it.* I pass by the Rules which St. *Augustin* in the same place gives to distinguish the Plain Expression, from the Figurative, it is enough that I have spoke of them in general; we may read more of them in his Third Book of the Doctrine of Christianity.

He affirms, That the same place of Scripture may be differently explain'd, and the Providence of God has given these many several Sences to the Holy Scriptures; but I doubt he stretches this Principle too far; and that under this pretence one may make Mens words pass for the Word of God; Most of the *Jews*, especially the Ancient ones have fallen into this fault, and to hide their Ignorance, they have laid down this Maxim, That *the Scripture has 72 Faces;* that is to say it may be Interpreted a great many different ways. I doubt not but there are many places of the Bible, where God has been pleas'd to have different Sences set down; but it is necessary that these places should be mark'd out, and the Reasons we have to give different Explanations to these places: We cannot for Example deny but that many things in the Old Testament may literally be apply'd to *David* and our Saviour; and this is grounded upon the Notion we have of Christianity. As these two Religions differ not in Substance, but that the last is the perfection of the former, it happens that what is literally said of *David* or *Solomon*, may be also literally said of our Saviour; but the sence must be more extended.

Lastly,

Lastly, St. *Augustin* gives us the Rules which a certain Donatist called *Tyconius* had invented for the more easie understanding of the Scripture; but these Rules seem to be too nice. Let us now see in particular the Method the Fathers have observ'd in their Commentaries upon the Bible.

## C H A P. IX.

### *Examination of the Method of the chief Fathers in their Commentaries upon the Holy Scripture, and especially of Origen, St. Jerom, and St. Augustin.*

**I** Do not here pretend to examine throughly and in every particular the Commentaries which every Father has writ upon the Bible. For besides that that would draw me on too far, my design is only to relate in short the Method of the most learned Fathers in their Explanations of the Scripture, that they who would follow this Study may know which are the best Authors. We may in general say, That the Fathers in their Homilies, or Discourses to the People, have often neglected the Literal Sence of the Scripture, which was not so proper for Exhortation as the Moral Allegorical Sence was. They are more exact in their private Treatises and Disputes against the *Jews* and *Hereticks*; but as most of them minded not the Study of Criticism, which is absolutely necessary for understanding of the Scripture, they deviate sometimes from the Letter, besides their Employments hinder'd them from searching into the bottom of this Matter.

*Origen.*

*Origen* is the first Father who studied most the Holy Scriptures, and his Method differs from that of the other Fathers who went before him, and one may say of him, that he has almost imitated no one, altho he had read their Commentaries of the Bible who had writ before him; whereas they who have liv'd since him have almost only Copy'd his Books. For this reason

reason St. *Jerom* calls him the first Dr. of the Church after the Apostles: *Post Apostolos Ecclesiarum Magistrum*. As he was very Learned, he made appear in his Commentaries upon the Scripture, that he understood as well the Holy Scriptures as Prophane Authors. He delighted chiefly in Allegories, not only because he had read the Works of the Platonick Philosophers, but also because he thought he might by this means, heighten the Scripture style, which seem'd plain before to the Heathens. Not but that he highly valu'd the Literal Sence, but because he thought the Allegorical was the most proper to draw the most Learned of those Times to Christianity. There are reckon'd Six Thousand Volumes or Scrowls which he has Compos'd upon the Scripture. However it is, this is certain, that no body has took so much pains about the Bible as he has, either in Correcting or Explaining of the Text. If we had his *Scholia*, or little Literal Notes upon the Text, and Translations of the Scripture, we might the better judge of his great Learning, and pains in the Criticism of the Holy Scriptures.

Besides, he understood Hebrew so well as not to be deceiv'd by the *Jews*, whom he sometimes consulted, and the great Capacity of his Mind made him discover several things which were of very great help in the clearing of the Scripture; we may understand the force of his Wit, and the Soundness of his Judgment, by his Homilies or Discourses which he made upon the spot; for although he abounded in Thoughts, however we find not so many Trifles and Digressions as in the Homilies of most of the other Fathers.

There is much more Learning in his Commentaries or Treatises where he searches deeper into the Sence of the Scripture, and St. *Jerom* has observ'd that in these Works he has had recourse to the Hebrew Text, that he might leave out nothing which might conduce to the clearing of the Holy Scriptures. He seems methinks to have shewn too much Learning in his Works upon the Scripture, and to have deviated from the Simplicity of the Bible; But as he had a piercing and quick Wit, he valued only a Sublime Sence and the Interpretation which he calls *Spiritual*, not caring for the Literal Sence, which he thought was only low and mean. However this is no good Method, because we ought not to explain things according to our own Fancies, or the Ideas we have of their being

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*Hieron. Præf. Interpret. Nomin. Heb.*

*Hieron. Præf. quæst. Heb. in Gen.*



mean or great: but we are to consider them in themselves, and according to their Nature. Thus many have been out who have Model'd their Notions according to the Platonists Books. If we once allow of this, every one may make ingenious and witty Sences according to their Fancies, and lay aside the Historical and Literal Sence of the Bible. It is true *Origen* may be in this excus'd, because Experience had taught him that the Letter of the Scripture was of no use for our Instruction; whereas his Allegories enlivened his Auditors, and made them Attentive to his Lectures.

I pass over several things I could say concerning the Method of *Origen*, and his way of Interpreting the Holy Scripture; but I intend to Treat hereof more thoroughly in the Second Part of this Work, where I shall make a Critical History of the New Testament: I shall here only add, that the *Scholia's* which were in the Margins of the Tetrapla's and Hexapla's of *Origen*, regarded not only the Explanation of the Text; but also the various Greek Translations in his Tetrapla's and Hexapla's.

A Learned Man who a while since writ very well upon this subject, could not understand how *Origen* could put in the Margin of his *Hexapla's*, which contain'd several Translations; the differences of these Translations. *Quis putare possit, says he, in Tetrapla, qua Scholiis succincta erant, depromptas è diversis interpretationum expositionibus particulas coniecisse Origenem cum in iis plana ipsa & integra interpretationes haberentur?* But if we consider what has already been said concerning the disposition of the *Tetrapla's* and *Hexapla's* of *Origen*, we shall not at all wonder that *Origen* could put in his *Hexapla's Scholia's* upon the different Translations; Because these *Scholia's* had relation to the Bible of the *Septuagint*, which was in his *Tetrapla's* and *Hexapla's* with Stars, and other marks before mentioned: and so the *Scholia's* were made only for their use who had a mind to read the *Hexapla's* Abridg'd. *Eusebius* and *Pamphilus* took Copies of these *Hexapla's* as they were Abridg'd, that is to say, of the *Septuagint* Translation, with all the Notes and *Scholiis* of *Origen*: and they added others in the Margin of their Copies; at least this is certain, that we find in many Manuscript Copies taken from the Ancient *Septuagint* Translation, as *Origen* had order'd it in his *Hexapla's*; we find, I say, in several Manuscript Copies some

some *Scholia's* which are truly *Origen's*, and others which he could not have insert'd himself in the Margins of his Copies; but they were without doubt added by those who writ these Copies for their private use; and thus we may easily reconcile these two sorts of *Scholia's*, some of which were after *Origen*, without absolutely denying that *Origen* put in the Margin of his *Hexapla's* the difference of Translations.

The most Learned Father after *Origen* was without doubt *Hieron.* *St. Jerom*, and we may in a manner call him the *Origen* of the Latins; because he endeavour'd to give the Latin Church what *Origen* had given the Greek. He excel'd even *Origen* in that he understood Hebrew better than he, and had had more converse with the *Jews* of his time. *St. Jerom* however had not so quick and piercing a Wit as *Origen*. Wherefore he runs not so often into Allegories and ingenious Sences; and besides his Allegories are sometimes only Etymologies and Quibbles upon words. But we may say he had more necessary Qualities for the well Translating of the Scripture than the other Fathers, because he understood *Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, and Latin*. He had not only read and examin'd the Greek Translations in the *Hexapla's* of *Origen*; but he often consulted with the most Learned *Jews* of his time, and he did nothing about the Scripture before he had consulted them. To which we may add, that he had read all the Authors, whether Greek or Latin, who had writ before him upon the Bible. Lastly, he understood very well *Prophane* Authors; so that we may say, That he had greater Advantages than any other Father to make him a Translator of the Holy Scriptures. He is not however always exact, because he did not think enough; and as he himself affirms, he usually Dictated to his Transcribers what he had read in the Commentaries of other Persons, or learnt from the *Jews*. Wherefore we ought not to think that all is his own which is in his Commentaries or Remarks upon the Scripture: for he sometimes sets down *Heterodox* Explanations, which he had read in the *Jews*, or *Hereticks* Books, as he acknowledges, and gives Rules to distinguish in his Writings what is truly his, from what is not. Thus he justifies himself from the Imputation of being inconstant, and of different Opinions.

His Commentaries upon the Books of the Prophets, are the best Compos'd; for he first gives the Ancient Latin Translation

which was then in use, to which he joyns another New one of his own making from the Hebrew Text; then he compares in his Commentaries the Ancient Greek Translations, to the end he may know the Propriety of the Hebrew words, most of which have different Significations; besides, as the Custom of that time was to fill the Translations of the Scripture with Allegories; he has also set down his Allegories, especially when he Explains the Ancient Latin Translation; he keeps closer to the Letter, when he Expounds the Text of his New Translation from the Hebrew, & he also makes mention of what he had learnt from the *Jews* of his time. He moreover observes the various Readings of the Hebrew Text, & by this means gives reasons why he has Translated several places otherwise than the *Septuagint* and other Greek Interpreters have done. But as he was the Author of a New Translation of the Bible, he has not sometimes been Moderate enough in his Criticism. He Corrects the *Septuagint* in many places, where there was no need of Correction, and he sometimes too hotly defends the Hebrew Text of his time, and the Jewish Translations.

It would have been well if this Father had had time to have consider'd over and over again his Commentaries, that he might have determin'd for the best. We have not however any Ancient Author from whom we may better learn the Literal Sense of the Scripture than St. *Jerom*, who nevertheless is not much esteem'd by most of our present Divines, because he seems to be Barren, and too much a Critick, and they neglect the Study of the Greek and Hebrew Tongues, without which we cannot read his Works.

To proceed; if we will be thoroughly instructed of St. *Jerom*'s Method in his Commentaries upon the Bible, we must read what has already been observ'd in the Two former Books, concerning his Wit and way of Writing, which is not Uniform. Unless we know how to distinguish the times which St. *Jerom* Compos'd his Books upon the Bible in, the different Personages he then acted; and last of all the Reasons why he writ them, we shall find in his Works nothing but manifest Contradictions.

In a word, he seems not to be always of the same Opinion, and what he has approv'd of in one place, he denies in another. He commends and blames the same Person according to the different

ferent occasions he has to speak of him. Sometimes he prefers the *Septuagint* Translation before all others, and he looks upon them as Prophets; sometimes he accuses them of ignorance, and condemns their Translation. Sometimes he calls *Origen* the first Doctor of the Church after the Apostles, and he generally Copies his Commentaries upon the Scripture; and in other places he speaks of him as of an Heretick, and one of the greatest Enemies of the Church. He does the same thing to the *Jews*, who he had taken for his Masters and Directors in the Study of the Holy Scripture, and yet in several places of his Commentaries he cannot away with them, but condemns their way of Explaining the Scripture. In a word, without diligent reading of St. *Jerom*, and understanding of the Reasons why he writ and spoke so differently of the same things in different places, we shall have much ado to justify his Method.

We may however do him this Justice, that he is the first of the Fathers who understood how to Explain the Scripture according to the Rules of Criticism; and if he sometimes makes use of Allegories, he does it as he himself affirms, only to please others, and to avoid being accus'd of favouring Judaism by his too Literal Expositions. This is the reason why in his Commentaries upon the Prophets, he so often Abridges the Literal Sense, when he Explains the Text according to his new Translation from the Hebrew, and he afterwards makes use of Allegories in the Explaining of the same Text, according to the *Septuagint* Translation. *Poteram, says this Father, juxta Hebraicum quid mihi videretur currens legentibus indicare; sed quid faciam quorundam Studiis, qui nisi Interpretum Editionem differuero, imperfectum opus me habiturum esse denuntiant?* If we also find in his Commentaries upon the Scriptures, such various Opinions, we ought methinks rather to lay the fault upon his Enemies who accus'd him of introducing of Novelties in the Church, than upon him. At least he gives this Reason to justify his Method, which was barely to Collect the Expositions of other Persons in his Commentaries, that he might give the Readers liberty of chooling which they thought fit, and not draw on him the hatred of many persons who oppos'd him.

We cannot however say that in the Criticism in his Commentaries upon the *Septuagint* Translation, and other Ancient Greek Interpreters, he has only reckon'd up the Authors which had gone.

Comment.

in Cap. 30.

Isai.

Proem. In

Lit Esai.

gone before him. On the contrary all this Criticism is wholly his; and if he has committed any faults, they ought to be ascrib'd to him. We ought therefore chiefly herein to examine St. *Jerom's* Method; and as he thought he might observe according to the Rules of Criticism, the faults he pretended to find in the Ancient Translation approv'd of by the Church, we may methinks take the same Liberty in examining of his Criticism.

St. *Jerom* has judiciously Corrected many places in the Ancient Greek *Septuagint* Translation, and of some other Greek Interpreters. No one can instruct us more thoroughly in the Criticism of the Holy Scriptures, than the Works of this Father. But on the contrary he does not always do the *Septuagint* and other Greek Translators justice, as we have already observ'd. The English Author who has made a Preface to the last Edition of the Greek *Septuagint* Printed at Cambridge in a little Volume, has very well observ'd many places where St. *Jerom* had no reason to blame the *Septuagint* where he himself has not been exact; but that hinders not but there are many Errors in the *Septuagint*, which St. *Jerom* has in several other places Learnedly Corrected, which the Author of the Preface ought to have mention'd to have done St. *Jerom* the same Justice he did the *Septuagint*.

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For the better understanding of St. *Jerom's* Method in the Books he has writ upon the Scripture, we ought to know the time he writ them in, the Disposition of his Mind, the Reasons he had to write them, and even the Disputes he had at that time. For Example, he had no other design in his Hebrew Questions upon *Genesis*, than to oppose the *Septuagint* Translation, and to show that we ought to prefer the Hebrew Text before it. Wherefore the too great Zeal he had of reprov'g the *Septuagint* was the Reason why he has not always done them Justice in that Book, and that he sometimes lays down some Maxims, wherein there seems to be some Superstition which he had borrow'd from the *Jews*. This is also the reason why in his Commentaries upon the Prophets, and especially upon *Isaiab* he lessens the Authority of the *Septuagint*, and crys up the Truth of the Hebrew Text. As his Enemies accus'd him of destroying by his new Translation, the ancient one approv'd of by the whole Church, he endeavours to show its faults, and at the same time to prove, that we ought

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to have recourse to the Original Hebrew. Wherein he seems not to have kept all due Moderation; and upon this Subject it is that we find strange Paradoxes as well in his Commentaries upon the Bible, as in some of his Epistles where he talks of these things. To which we may also add, that he is sometimes so prepossess'd in favour of the Hebrew Tongue, that he sets down things wholly Foreign, as in his Commentary upon Chap. 3. of the Book of *Wisdom*, where we read in the Vulgar, *Nugas qui à lege recesserant congregabo*, He affirms, That the Hebrew word *Nuge*, out to be Translated *Nugas* in the Latin, and he proves it because the Hebrew Tongue is the first and Original of all others. *Id quod diximus Nugas*, says this Father, speaking of his Translation, *Sciamus in Hebrao ipsum Latinum esse sermonem (Nuge) & propterea, à Nobis. Ita ut in Hebrao positum, ut nosse possimus linguam Hebraicam omnium Linguarum esse Matricem.* If the Etymology of a Hebrew word was only to be given, one might excuse this fault and justify it by the Example of *Varro*, who committed the same Error, in relating in Latin the Etymology of several words which could be deriv'd only from Greek. But the Question here is concerning the Translation of the Scripture, and St. *Jerom* had no Power to wrest the true Sense either in his Translation or Commentaries. The Ancient Vulgar which he has Corrected in this place, agreed with the Hebrew Text, and therefore he had done better to have let it alone. But we have not here the leisure to mark particularly all the places where St. *Jerom* seems to have err'd, in his Commentaries upon the Scripture. It is sufficient to have spoke in general; and at the same time to have observ'd the cause, to the end we may be forewarn'd in reading the Works of St. *Jerom* upon the Bible.

After *Origen* and St. *Jerom*, I am of Opinion that St. *Augustin* *August.* deserves the next place, who had not indeed so much Learning as these two first Fathers; but he has supply'd that Defect by the force of his Wit, and the solidity of his Judgment: He has very well observ'd in his Books of the Doctrine of Christianity, and in several other places of his Works, the Necessary Qualities for the well Translating of the Scriptures, and as he was Modest he ingenuously acknowledges he wanted most of these Qualities; and therefore we ought not to wonder if we do not always find his Commentaries upon the Bible exact; besides, he was not

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C. 3. Book  
of Wisdom.  
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vers'd in this sort of Study when he undertook to write upon this Subject, as he himself acknowledges. He had indeed a more quick and piercing Judgment than St. *Jerom*, and he is more restrain'd and moderate in whatever he invents than *Origen*. But as he understood but very indifferently Greek, and was utterly ignorant of the Hebrew Tongue, the work he undertook upon *Genesis*, to answer the *Manichæes*, seems to be above him. Wherefore he was obliged to review it, and he was not ashamed to Condemn what he had too rashly done, and without the necessary helps for the well Expounding of the Scripture.

His Business was to answer the *Manichæes*, who laid aside the Books of the Old Testament, which seem'd to be ridiculous, being Expounded according to the Letter. St. *Augustin* who thought he could answer the Objections of these Hereticks, undertook the Defence of the Common Cause of the Church in a Book Intituled, *Liber De Genesi ad literam imperfectus*. But he deviated so much from the Literal Sence, that afterwards he acknowledg'd this Work to be above him. *In Scripturis exponendis*, says he, *Tyrocinium meum sub tanta sarcina mole succubuit*. He found so much difficulty in Translating Literally the History of the Creation.

Lib. 1. retr.  
c. 18.

In stead of searching for the Literal Sence to answer exactly the *Manichæes*, he runs upon Allegorical Sences, foreign to the History and the Letter of the Text. This made him write again upon the same Subject, where he tyes himself up not so much as he ought to the Literal Sence, and where he starts more Questions as he himself says, than he resolves. *Plura quesita quam inventa sunt*. As he had a clear Wit, he easily found out the difficulties of the Scripture, and he made some where there were none; but he was not well enough vers'd in this Study to give proper Solutions for to satisfy his Readers.

Lib. 2. retr.  
c. 24.

He had besides many prejudices of Philosophy or Divinity, which he puts down in all his Works; he however shews in his Questions upon the Seven first Books of the Bible, that he was not ignorant in Criticism, and that if he had better understood Greek and Hebrew, he would have succeeded better; besides he had not time enough to think upon a matter of this Importance. He also confesses that he call'd this Work Questions, because he rather propos'd Doubts, than gave Solutions; although he has satisfy'd

satisfy'd many, his Commentaries or rather Sermons upon the Psalms, contain only the Moral & Allegorical Sence, and are full of Digressions & unprofitable Subtleties. St. *Jerom* having view'd this Work could not altogether allow of it, because St. *Augustin* had not follow'd the usual Method of the Fathers, whom he had not consulted upon this Point.

He ought indeed to have Expounded the Psalms otherwise than *Hieron.* he has done, and he has in his Allegories deviated too much from *Ep. 92.* his Text. I cannot however approve of the too great heats of Father *Castellan* great Almoner of France, who blames St. *Augustin*, too freely accusing him that he only dreamt when he plain'd the Holy Scriptures; because he understood not the Tongues in which they were writ. He ought more modestly to have said that St. *Augustin* had not all the Qualities which he himself thought were necessary for the Expounding of the Scripture.

For there are few at present who would imitate St. *Augustin's* Method in his Exposition of the Psalms. Most of the Allegories and Quirks which this Work is full of, would please us no more than they did St. *Jerom*. I shall only give part of his Commentary upon these words of *Psal. 59. Moab olla spei mee*, as we read in the Ancient and present Vulgar Translation. By the *Moabites* according to him are understood those who abus'd the Law, and although the word *Law*, says this Father, is of the Feminine Gender in the Latin, it is nevertheless Masculine in the Greek. And the Law ought to have the force of the Masculine Gender, in that it Governs, and is not govern'd. Moreover by the Latin word *Olla*, he understands the Tribulations of the Church, caus'd by those who abuse the Law, then he adds, *That the Church shall not fall under these Tribulations, because the Pot or burning Vessel mention'd in this place, is a Vessel of Hope.*

But we need not relate more at large the words of St. *Augustin*, there being no one but may consult his Commentaries upon the Psalms, and find that he delighted too much in Allegories and Quirks, which agree not with the Subject he Treats of. Which can only be imputed to him by reason of the little knowledge he had of the Holy Tongues; for it is certain that the studying of Tongues makes one more fit for the searching out of the Truth of Facts, especially when we study not those

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Tongues for the Tongues themselves, but only to find out the Truths therein contain'd; To which we may add, That the reading of the Philosophers and other Platonick Authors, had made St. *Augustin* not to be so exact in his Commentaries upon the Scripture, as when he describes any number. The Platonick Philosophy furnishes him then with mysteries for the explaining of these numbers. Thus in the beginning of his fourth Book

Lib. 4. de  
Gen. ad  
Lit. 6, 7.

*De Genesi ad Literam*, where he expounds the six days Creation, he sets down at large the Perfection and Advantages which the number six has above all other numbers; and after having largely treated upon the propriety of several numbers, he concludes, that the number six is not perfect because God created the World in six dayes, but on the contrary, that God created the World in six dayes because the number six was a perfect number; and thus the things created have taken their Perfection from the number six. *Non possumus dicere propterea numerum senarium esse perfectum, quia sex diebus Deus perfecit omnia opera sua; sed propterea Deum sex Diebus omnia perfecisse opera sua, quia senarius numerus perfectus est; Itaque etiamsi illa non essent, perfectus ille esset. Nisi autem ille perfectus esset, ista secundum eum perfecta non fierent.*

Lastly, St. *Augustin* according to the Method of the Platonick Philosophers usually joyns a certain Idea of Perfection to most things, by which he guides himself, which makes him seem more equal in his way of reasoning than the other Fathers. But there is a great deal of difference betwixt necessary Truths, which never alter, and Truths which relate only to Deeds, which we may in some fashion call contingent Truths, St. *Augustin* by Meditating might form true Notions of the first; but it is not the same thing with Acts which cannot be thoroughly understood by bare Speculation. Now the Truths contain'd in the Scripture are of this last sort; they depend not upon the Idea we may conceive of them, but we must study them in themselves, and be much conversant in the style and expressions of the Holy Scripture. In a word, this Knowledge lyes more in the Method we have already set down, than in the force of our Conceptions; and as St. *Augustin* had not all the help which he himself thought was necessary for the acquiring of a perfect Knowledge of the Holy Scripture, he has sometimes accommodated the Scripture to his Notions, whereas he ought to have accommodated his Notions

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to the Scripture. Which may be prov'd by many Examples, where he wrests the Scripture sense to the Idea he has of things; and this will yet more appear in his Disputes, where we find his way of arguing to agree exactly with the Principles he has set down, from which he seldom deviates. Wherefore, when it happens that he is deceived in the laying down of his Principles, we may for all that see a great Order and appearance of truth in his Discourse, although there are very often onely probabilities, and the places of Scripture which he quotes to maintain his Opinions, are not related according to the natural sense, as I shall more fully shew in the second part of this Work, which will contain a Critical History of the New Testament, where I shall more particularly examine the Commentaries of this holy Dr. upon the Bible, and his way of arguing, when it is grounded upon Scripture.

I shall produce here, for an Example of what I have already asserted concerning the Wit and Method of St. *Augustin*, the Dispute he held with St. *Jerom* concerning the Translation of the Bible in general, and some particular Difficulties in the Exposition of St. *Paul*, in his Epistle to the *Galatians*.

First, As for what relates to the Translation of the Bible, St. *Augustin*, who had not sufficiently considered the new Translations of St. *Jerom*, ask'd him, why his last Translation from the *Hebrew* was not so exact and true as the former, where he had put little Stars to mark what was wanting in the Septuagint, and was in the *Hebrew*. As this Question could not be put by one who was wholly ignorant of the Subject he spoke of, St. *Jerom* was oblig'd to answer him, *Pace tua dixerim, videris mihi non intelligere quod quasisti.* In effect St. *Jerom* had in his first Translation from the Septuagint, added Supplements taken from the *Hebrew* Text; and as for his second Translation, made wholly from the *Hebrew*, he could not add Stars to mark the Supplements taken from the *Hebrew*, since he had translated it wholly from the *Hebrew*.

Besides, the same St. *Augustin*, who approv'd not of St. *Jerom*'s new Translation from the *Hebrew*, wonders that he durst undertake the making of a new Translation from the *Hebrew* Text, it being impossible for him to succeed better than the other Interpreters who went before him; then he adds, to divert him wholly from this Work, that in the obscure places of this Text, men

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August.  
Hieron.  
Ep. 88.

August.  
Hieron.  
Ep. 86.



would give no more credit to his Translation than to the Antient ones, and for the other places which are plain, they need not be translated a new. But St. *Jerom*, who presently understood that St. *Augustin* spoke of a Business he understood not, answer'd him according to his own way of arguing, which he applies to St. *Augustin*'s new Commentaries upon the Psalms, made after many Learned Fathers; They who have translated these Books before you, says St. *Jerom*, speaking to St. *Augustin*, either they have interpreted the hard and difficult places, and in this case you will be believ'd no more than they, or they have explain'd the plain and easie places; and then your Commentaries are altogether unnecessary.

This answer St. *Jerom* gave St. *Augustin*, making use of his own Weapons, and indeed to frame a right Judgment concerning the necessity of a new Translation of the Bible, we ought first to have examined the other Translations, and compar'd them with the *Hebrew* Text. If St. *Augustin*'s Argument had held good, he had by that made all the *Greek* Translations of the Bible, made after the Septuagint, and even all the *Latin* ones, made from the Septuagint, after the Antient Vulgar one, to have been unnecessary; and therefore he himself has confess'd the advantage in his Books of the Doctrine of Christianity: and so we may say that St. *Augustin* had not thoroughly examin'd St. *Jerom*'s new Translation, or rather, not being capable of examining it, he, according to his custom, rely'd upon his own Notion of the little necessity there was of a new Translation of the Bible from the *Hebrew*; and this Notion of his not being true, all the Consequences from thence drawn are likewise false.

Secondly, St. *Augustin* blam'd St. *Jerom* for giving an Exposition to the words of St. *Paul*, in chap. 2. Epist. ad *Galat.* which wholly ruin'd the truth of the Holy Scriptures. But we may easily understand by St. *Augustin*'s way of arguing, that he, forming to himself a Notion of Truth in general, and particularly of the truth which ought to be ascrib'd to the Word of God, and not clearly understanding St. *Jerom*'s sense, he accus'd him without any reason of having thought there were falsitics in the Scripture.

*Hieron. Ep. August. 89.* St. *Jerom*, who immediately perceiv'd that St. *Augustin* touch'd not upon the thing in question, but that he had form'd to himself a Notion which was onely probable, and had some appearance of truth, answer'd, that he said nothing in his Commentary

ry touching the matter in hand, which had been maintain'd before him by the most Learned Fathers, and so instead of his Interpretation, ruining the Truth of the Scripture, one might say it was in a manner confirm'd by the Tradition of the Church, since he had only in that place related the Opinions of the Fathers.

St. *Jerom* seems tacitely to blame St. *Augustin* for consulting only in this place his own reason, whereas he ought to have seen what in a Matter of Fact the Ancient Doctors of the Church had writ, to the end he might have a right Idea of their Expositions. *De magnis*, says St. *Jerom*, *statuere non audeo, nisi hoc ingenio confiteri, me majorum scripta legere, & in Commentariis secundum omnium consuetudinem varias ponere Explicationes, ut e multis sequatur unusquisq; quod velit.* And lastly, after he had nam'd the Authors, he follow'd in the Expounding of the place in Question, he adds in speaking of St. *Augustin*: *Si igitur me reprehendis errantem, patere me queso errare cum talibus, & cum me erroris mei multis socios habere prospexeris, tu veritatis tua saltem unum ad stipulatorem proferre debbis.*

St. *Augustin* seems to acknowledge his fault in one of his Epistles to St. *Jerom*, where he does all he can to dissuade him from Translating of the Scripture from the *Hebrew* Text, and he Exhorts him at the same time to Translate the Commentaries of the *Greek* Fathers who had writ upon the Bible. *Petimus ergo*, says this Dr. writing to St. *Jerom*, *Et nobiscum petit omnis Africanarum Ecclesiarum studiosa societas, ut interpretandis, qui Græce Scripturas nostras quam optime tractaverunt, curam atq; operam impendere non graveris.* As then he understood not *Greek* well enough to read the *Greek* Fathers Commentaries upon the Bible, he desir'd St. *Jerom* to Translate them into *Latin* that he might read them. He would perhaps have follow'd another Method in his Commentary upon the Psalms, and several other of his Works, if he had read all the Ancient Drs. Books which went before him. Wherefore St. *Jerom* could not approve of his way of Explaining these Psalms, by deviating from the other Fathers Method: and in writing to St. *Augustin* his Opinion of what he had read in his Commentaries upon the Psalms, he tells him, *Quos si vellem discutere, non dicam à me qui nihil sum, sed à veterum Græcorum doctorem interpretationibus discrepare.*

*August. Hieron. Ep. 86.*

*Hieron. Ep. 92.*

## CHAP. X.

*The Method of several other Fathers in their Commentaries upon the Bible Examined. The different ways of Expounding the Scriptures according to the different times.*

**M**ost of the Fathers who liv'd after *Origen*, only Copy'd his Commentaries and other Treatises upon the Scriptures; Those who were of contrary Opinion to him, could not help reading of them, and making advantage thereby; and altho they rejected his Doctrine, they admir'd his great Learning; so that in a little while the whole Church was full of *Origen's* Works, most of them being Translated into Latin. Every one however took the liberty of Translating them as he thought fit, by adding, diminishing, and changing what he thought was necessary, that he might not seem wholly to agree with *Origen's* Opinion. Thus *St. Hilary* and *Victorin*, as *St. Jerom* observes, Translated the Commentaries of *Origen*; and moreover *St. Ambrosius* inserted in his Work of the six days Creation *Origen's* Expositions without following his Opinion. *Nec desertiores sumus Hilario, says St. Jerom, nec fideliores Victorino, qui ejus tractatus, non ut interpretes, sed ut Authores proprii operis transtulerunt. Nuper sanctus Ambrosius sic Hexaëmeron illius compilavit, ut magis Hyppolyti sententias Basiliiq; sequeretur.*

Amongst the Latins *St. Jerom* and *St. Augustin* were esteem'd the two great Authors by the Fathers, who writ after them upon the Bible. They have hardly added any thing to their Explanations, except some Allegories and Moralities, which they could easily invent. Wherefore we shall not speak much of the Commentaries of the last Latin Fathers, having already at large Explain'd *St. Jerom's* and *St. Augustin's* Method; and before that time, as we have already observ'd, they only Copy'd *Origen's* Works. We find for Example in *St. Hilary's* Commentary, which we have upon the Psalms, a certain Spiritual Sense fitted

*Hieron.*  
Ep. 69.  
Ad Pam.  
mach. &  
Ocean.

*Hilar.*  
Comm. in  
Psal.

to

to our Mysteries, which is indeed useful for the instructing of us in the truths of Christianity; but as this sense very often agrees not with the Letter, this Method is not exact; besides under pretence of giving a Spiritual sense; he goes a little too far, and gives us only his own Imaginations. Wherefore *St. Hilary* has not took care enough; and altho *St. Jerom* affirms, that *St. Hilary* us'd not the Commentaries of *Origen* upon the Scripture barely as a Transcriber, but has fitted them to his own Sentiments; we may nevertheless find in many places *Origen's* Opinions untouch'd, as well as in the Commentaries of *St. Jerom*.

What *St. Hilary* relates in his Commentaries concerning the Hebrew Text, and the Traditions and Customs of the *Jews* has been taken from *Origen's* Books, which may in a manner be call'd the Library of the Fathers upon the Scripture. However as *St. Hilary* was not vers'd in this sort of Knowledge, he is not always exact, as in his Commentary upon the *Psalms* 2. where he says, the first words of *Genesis* may be Explain'd three several ways, amongst which he reckons the Translation in Folio, which is rather an Explanation than a Translation of these words. Besides in the same place he confounds the 72 Elders, to whom he affirms, according to the common Opinion of the *Jews*, that *Moses* gave the hidden and mystical Sense of the Law, when he gave it them in Writing; He confounds I say these 72 Elders with the 72 Interpreters, who are generally thought to make the Greek Translation which goes under their Name. Thence he infers, that those Interpreters have Translated the words which are equivocal in the Hebrew, according to the proper sense; whence he concludes we ought to lay aside all other Translations of the Bible, as being faulty; because the Authors of these Translations had not this Secret and Divine Translation which the 72 Interpreters receiv'd from *Moses*.

I pass by several other Observations which I could make upon the Commentaries of *St. Hilary*, and some other Ancient Fathers. It is sufficient to have observ'd in general, that they are seldom as to the Criticism and Literal sense of the Bible exact, and we ought rather to search for the Truth of our Religion in their Commentaries upon the Bible, than the Literal Sense of the Scripture. The Fathers have been always more guided in Matters of Faith by the Tradition of the Church, than by the Gram-

matical.

2<sup>m</sup>. 414  
L. 3. C. 4.

matical and Literal Sense of the Bible. Wherefore *Irenaeus* confutes not the first Hereticks so much by the Scripture as by Tradition, and he guides himself by the belief of the chief Churches of those times. *Quid autem*, says he, *si neq; Apostoli reliquissent nobis Scripturas, nonne oportebat sequi Ordinem Traditionis, quam Tradiderunt eis, quibus committebant Ecclesias?* It is impossible to find all things which relate to Religion in the Scripture, unless we likewise allow of this Ancient and Divine Tradition which the first Fathers have consulted, not only in things relating to the Discipline of the Church, but likewise in things concerning Matters of Faith.

There has always been in the Church an Abridgement as it were of Religion, besides the Scripture by which we ought to regulate what we find obscure in the Scripture. This Method has been observ'd in the decisions of Councils, where the Bishops have related the Faith commonly receiv'd in their Churches. They were not of Opinion that to find out the Sense of any difficult place of the Scripture, we ought to go to the Grammarians, and those that were learned in Criticism; but they have inquir'd into the common belief of the Church; and thus the Explanation of most of the Fathers are rather Applications than Literal Explanations. They leave us for all that the liberty of looking for more Literal Explanations; and *Origen* himself who seems to despise the Literal Explanations as too mean, joyns however *Scholias* with his Hexaplasts, where we find hardly any thing but Criticism.

However for the better understanding of the Father's Method in their Commentaries upon the Scriptures; it is fit we should examine some of them in particular: we will begin then with the Explanations, generally call'd Homilies. The style of the Homilies being vulgar, we cannot expect that exactness which the Literal Sense may require; because in them only those things which are thought useful are propos'd to the People. Thus *St. Chrysostom* Compos'd his Homilies upon *Genesis*, where he chiefly heeds the Morality, and the making of his Auditors rather honest than learned men; He neglects not however the Literal Sense, where he thinks it necessary. And as he was no less Judicious than Eloquent, he shuns as much as he can intricate and subtil Questions, as also all Allegories. He observes the same Method in his Exposition of the Psalms, with this difference only, that

St. Chryso-  
som.

that he sometimes sets down the Greek Translations of *Aquila*, *Theodotion*, *Symmachus*, &c. and that he sometimes quotes the Hebrew Text as it is in the Hexaplasts of *Origen* in Greek Characters.

*St. Basil* is more subtle in his Homilies, which he has writ upon *Basil.* the six Days Creation of the World, than *St. Chrysostom*; and they seem to be Compos'd rather for the Learned than Ignorant People. He explains however very often the Letter of the Text, and he sometimes gives even the Grammatical Sense, by observing how the Hebrew and Greek words may be differently Translated. The Greek Fathers have admir'd this Work, as well by reason of the Author's great Eloquence, as of a certain Learning *St. Basil* has herein affected. He is in his Homilies rather a compleat Orator, than an Interpreter of the Holy Text, which Method is usual with most of the Fathers, especially the Greek, who generally amplify things in their Discourses. He keeps the same Method in his Homilies upon some Psalms, where he shows not indeed so much Learning; but there is more Morality by reason of the Subject there Treated of. He follows more the Letter in his Commentaries upon *Isaiah*; altho there are also some Digressions which relate to Morality. This Father confesses we cannot understand the Scripture without being vers'd almost one's whole life in this Study. To conclude, we find not so much Learning in his Commentaries as in his Homilies upon the six days Creation, because the Subject is more grave. On the contrary, he strives to quote nothing else but passages taken from different places of the Scripture, which his Book is full of.

*St. Ambrosius*, who has also writ upon the six days Creation, *St. Ambros.* has only Copy'd *Origen's* Books, and *St. Basil's* Homilies, changing only the order of the words; but he observes *St. Basil's* Method, being very Learned, and making many Digressions. It is true, as they Treated about the Creation of the world, they might confute the Heathen Philosophers Opinions upon this Point, and tell their own; the little Works of *St. Ambrosius* upon some Chapters of *Genesis*, plainly show, he delighted more in Allegories, than in the Historical Sense. He has imitated the Copious style of the Greek Fathers, and he has in several places endeavour'd to imitate *Origen* in his Allegories, and to find out mystical Sences; as if the Historical was too low and plain.

St. Cyrille. The Commentaries of St. Cyrille of Alexandria are rather Divinity Readings, wherein he instructs the People concerning the mysteries of our Religion, than an Explanation of the Hebrew Text. This appears by what he has writ upon the *Pentateuch*, which he Expounds by alluding to the New Testament. Wherefore he ties not himself up to the Letter, the better to enlarge upon the Spiritual Sence, Allegories, and Morality. I likewise find that he has not exactly follow'd the *Septuagint* Translation; but when he has thought of Explanations more agreeable to his Principles, he has chose the Translation which agreed best with them; as in Chap. 4. *Gen.* Verse 26. where we read of *Enos* in the Greek *Septuagint*, That he began to call upon the Name of the Lord; which St. Cyrille has read, He began to be call'd by the Name of the Lord. Which he afterwards Explains, as if *Enos* had been call'd after the Name of the Lord by reason of his great Sanctity.

But the *Septuagint's* Sence comes nigher the Letter, altho his Translation agrees better with the strict Rules of Grammar, and it has been follow'd by some Learned Greek Fathers. We ought to observe, that most of the Ancient Fathers not understanding Hebrew, have had recourse to the most Literal Translations of those which were in the Hexaplasts of *Origen*, and especially to that of *Aquila's*. But as this last Translation follows too closely the Grammatical Sence, it is often barbarous, and causes them to fall into Errors who follow it too closely; And this has been St. Cyril's and *Theodoret's* fault in this place, who have observ'd too closely the Hebrew words, whence they have afterwards made a Sence accordingly; whereas the *Septuagint* Translation is here more exact both according to the Letter and Sence.

Gen. 6.4. To proceed, altho this Father runs much upon the Moral and Mystical Sence, he sometimes follows the Literal; especially when the thing requires it. As in Chap. 6. *Gen.* Vers. 4. where he observes that in some Greek Copies of the Bible we read, *The Angels of God came in unto the Daughters of Men*; he then confutes this reading, and all the false Consequences some have from thence rais'd. Wherefore he prefers the other reading, where it is, *The Sons of God came in unto the Daughters of Men*. And he confirms it by *Aquila's* and *Symmachus's* Translations, the first of whom has Translated it word for word *the Sons of the Gods*, and the

the other according to the Sence of the words, *the Sons of the Mighty*. He also observes that the Scripture usually calls those Giants who have any extraordinary strength of Body, and confutes at the same time the fabulous Stories of the Greeks concerning the Giants.

St. Cyril observes a more Sublime and Allegorical Sence in his Commentaries upon *Exodus* and *Leviticus*, than in *Genesis*. In a word, his chief design is to make known Jesus Christ, and the Mysteries of our Religion, relying upon this Maxim, That the Old Testament was only the Type and Shadow of the New; and thus he applies to our Saviour and his Mysteries most of the things in *Exodus* and *Leviticus*. He observes this Method in some places of the two other Books of the *Pentateuch*, and to authorize this way of interpreting the Old Testament by alluding to the Truths contain'd in the New; he adds, there are none but they who throughly understand the Mysteries of our Religion, who throughly can judge of these sublime Sences. I pass over his Commentaries upon the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, because this Father is very Methodical.

*Theodoret* has follow'd a different Method from the other Fathers, for he has neither writ Homilies nor Commentaries upon the whole Scripture; but has made Questions upon one Part, and Commentaries upon the other; There are indeed some unnecessary things in his Questions, which seem to be too much studied for; but on the other side we find a great stock of Divinity, and a vast knowledge of the Scripture style. We ought to observe this Father more than any other, if we will be Learned in the Scripture. He puts down sometimes Allegories rather to adorn his Discourse than to illustrate the matter he Treats of; which he ought to avoid in his Questions, where we ought barely to propound and resolve in few words. He had read most of the other Greek Fathers, and especially *Origen*, and St. *Chrysostom*, whom he often imitates. He moreover sometimes quotes the Ancient Greek Translators, and the Hebrew Text which he read in the Hexaplasts of *Origen*, and in the Interpretation of the Hebrew words which *Origen* had also Publish'd.

Besides his Questions upon the *Pentateuch*, *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*, *Samuel*, the Books of *Kings*, and the *Chronicles*, he has made Commentaries upon the *Psalms*, and several other Books of the Bible, which he Expounds as Literally as he can, by mixing how-

ever something of Morality. He keeps closer to the Letter than the other Greek Fathers, and his style is not so Copious, altho he sometimes adorns it with Comparisons. He very often quotes the Ancient Greek Translations of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion*, to Illustrate the Scripture Text, and he does not always follow the *Septuagint*, especially when he thinks that other Translations express better the Sence of the Scripture.

It is unnecessary to run over the Commentaries of the other Fathers upon the Scripture; because as I have already observ'd, the last have only Copy'd from the first, adding but little of their own, and those Additions are for the most part but Moral Digressions. Thus *Gregory* the Great made long Commentaries upon *Job*, where he neglects the Literal Sence, as being of little use for the Instruction of the People. This Father had read *St. Augustin's* Works, which he has fill'd his own with, and in this he is Judicious enough, that he keeps not wholly to the Ancient Latin Translation made from the *Septuagint*, which was in those times the Vulgar Translation. But he goes to *St. Jerom's* new Translation from the Hebrew, where he finds it better than the Ancient one; He affirms, That he makes use of these two Translations, because they were then us'd at *Rome*, and this was the reason why *St. Jerom's* new Translation was receiv'd, which afterwards went beyond the Ancient Vulgar.

*Cassiodore.* There is no need of examining *Cassiodore's* Commentaries upon the Psalms, which is almost but an Abridgement of *St. Augustin's* Commentaries upon the same Books, as he confesses in his Preface. Besides these Commentaries, we have an excellent Treatise of this Authors, Entitled, *De Institutione Divinitatum*, where he shows he understood the Criticism of the Scripture, and that he markt out what were the best things of this Nature in the Ancient Drs. of the Church, he recommends above all things the Correct Copies of the Bible. *Istud enim genus emendationis*, says he, *valde Pulcherrimum, & doctissimorum hominum negotium gloriosum*; but as he chiefly writ in Latin, most of the Rules he gave for the Correcting of the Scripture relate only to the Latin Copies. He will have us however when we meet with Difficulties, to consult both the Greek and Hebrew Copies; that is to say, *St. Jerom's* Correction of the Ancient Vulgar Latin by the Greek Copies, and the new Translation of *St. Jerom* from the Hebrew Text, or even the Greek and Hebrew Originals if we can;

can; *Quod si tamen alia verba reperiuntur absurde posita, aut ex his codicibus quos B. Hieronymus in editione 70 Interpretum emendavit, vel quos ipse ex Hebraeo transtulit, intrepide corrigenda sunt; aut sicut B. Augustinus ait, recurrito ad Græcum Pandecten, qui non in legem divinam dignoscitur continere collectam, vel quibus possibile fuerit Hebraeam Scripturam, vel ejus doctores requirere non detrectent.*

By these words of *Cassiodore* we may easily see that in his time they us'd *St. Jerom's* new Translation from the Hebrew at *Rome*, as well as the Ancient Vulgar one made from the *Septuagint*, and that they rely'd upon the Authority of *St. Jerom*, as also upon *St. Augustin's* for the authorizing this new Translation, because they thought it agreed better with the Original Hebrew than the *Septuagint* did: And lastly, this is the Reason why it alone has been preserv'd in the Church.

In the same Book *Cassiodore* gives many useful Rules for the Criticism of the Scripture, and he takes particular notice of those Fathers who have made Commentaries upon the Bible, especially the Works of the Latin Doctors; because he writ as he says, for those who spoke Latin, *Ut quoniam Italis scribimus, Romanos quoque* *Cassiod. expositores commodissime indicasse videamur. Dulcius enim ab uno- Praef. in Lib. Div. quoque suscipitur quod Patrio sermone narratur.* His greatest Au- Lect. thors are *St. Jerom* and *St. Augustin*, to whom he is beholden for most of his Rules for the Interpretation of the Scripture, which he has set down in his Work. He mentions several Books which we at present want, and amongst others, certain Remarks of *St. Jerom* upon the Prophets, for the making the Study of the Scripture more easie to young Men. He has so great a value for *St. Jerom's* new Translation from the Hebrew, that he declares we have no farther need of the Hebrew Text, having so exact a Translation, *Qui nobis*, says he in speaking of *St. Jerom*, in *Translatione Divina Scriptura tantum præsinit ut ad Hebraicum fontem pane non egeamus accedere.* Lastly, This Author takes notice of the best Books for Orthography, to the end we may follow their Rules in Transcribing of the Copies of the Bible.

For fear of being tedious by reckoning up of several other Authors who have writ upon the Bible, besides the Fathers we have already Treated of, we shall only in general observe that there are few who have kept close to the Literal Sence. They have Collected only the Expositions of the Fathers, adding



adding very little of their own, unless some Allegories and Moralities.

*Beda.*

*Rabbanus  
Maurus.*

*Beda*, The Venerable, which was the Title then given to Bishops or Abbots, follow'd this last Method. *Rabbanus Maurus* Archbishop of *Mayence*, in his Commentaries upon the Bible Collected only out of the Fathers, and especially out of the Books of *St. Jerom*, who was his great Author. He however adds his own Exposition in some places, which were not Explain'd in the Commentaries of the Fathers. *Rabbanus Maurus* in this seems to imitate *St. Jerom*; who prefer'd this way of Interpreting of the Scriptures before all others, and affirm'd that the word Commentary implies this very thing.

*Procop.  
Gaza.*

Nevertheless in these latter Ages, the Latins have call'd these sort of Collections *Catena*, whercof we have a great many. *Procopius of Gaza* has observ'd this Method amongst the Greeks, as may be seen in his Work upon the Eight first Books of the Bible, where he has Collected several Explanations of the Text, without naming either the Authors or the Works, unless where he quotes the Hebrew Text, and the other Interpreters which he consulted in the Hexaplasts of *Origen*. Seeing we want these Hexaplasts's, *Procopius* Books are very useful for the supplying in some sort this defect. Besides he Explains the Propriety of the Hebrew words, as also the Greek ones, which the Greek Interpreters make use of; but as he understood not Hebrew, he is often mistaken, as appears by what he relates in Chap. 1st. of *Genesis*. He enlarges not so much upon the other Books of the Bible as upon *Genesis*, and he has writ only little *Scholias* or Illustrations upon the Books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles*, where he nevertheless sets down the Translations of the Ancient Greek Interpreters. He enlarges more upon the Prophecy of *Isaiab*, which he fully Explains, and besides the various Explanations which he has Collected in the Nature of Commentaries, he sets down the *Septuagint*, and the differences of the Ancient Greek Translations in the Hexaplasts of *Origen*, and the Signs or Critical marks which were in those Hexaplasts's. However the *Septuagint* he makes use of is not exact, because it was hard at that time to find true Copies thereof. These Collections upon the Scripture are very useful, especially when the Names of the Authors of each Explanation are set down. The Greeks in the beginning us'd not to set down the Names, and I believe

believe *St. Hillary*, *St. Ambrosius*, and *St. Jerom* imitated them herein, only *St. Jerom* in his Prefaces to his Commentaries upon the Scriptures, mentions the Authors or Fathers which he has follow'd. But it is much better to mark the Authors Names exactly, as the Greeks in their last Collections upon the Bible have done. We cannot however hinder the Transcribers sometimes from changing the Names, and ascribing to one Father what belongs to another, as I have observ'd by comparing some Manuscript Copies of these Collections. They besides have taken the liberty of adding new Explanations, which has bred a great deal of confusion in all those Books, where these Additions have not been mark'd.

Some of these Collections which we have call'd *Catena*, and amongst others that upon the Book of *Job* Printed at *Lyons* and *London*, has been ascrib'd to *Nicetas* Metropolitan of *Heraclæa*. *Nicetas*. *Comitolus* the Jesuit, who caus'd it to be Printed, brings *Comitolus*. many Reasons to prove that *Olympiodorus* is the Author of it. However it is, the Names of the Authors who Compose this Collection are variously set down; as I have observ'd by comparing of the different Editions with a Manuscript Copy.

The Greeks have a great many of these Collections upon most of the Books of the Bible, and we find in Libraries a great many that were never Printed. It is not necessary that these Collections should be Publish'd entire, since we have most of the Authors whence they have been taken; but it would be well if there be any particular thing not yet known, that it should be made Publick.

We ought to say the same thing of the Collections which the Latins call *Catena*. These Works were very useful before the Commentaries of the Fathers and other Authors, of the Bible were Printed. We ought rather to read the Fathers Explanations out of their own Books, than out of the Books which are only Extracts of them: besides, these Collections contain many frivolous things. Thus *Lippoman* has Collected many Fathers, *Lippoman*. and other Ecclesiastical Authors Explanations upon *Genesis*. A regular Canon, who would go beyond *Lippoman*, has Printed at *Pavia* two great Volumes in Folio upon the First Chapter of *Genesis*, which he has call'd *Glossa Magna in Genesim*; as if all other glosses had been too short; But one had need have a great deal of time to spend to read these

without examining whether these Literal Explanations could be call'd Glosses. This same Author is also sometimes too nice and full of Subtilties, which have no relation to the Subject. Which may be allow'd in Homilies or other large Discourses, but not in Glosses.

There is in this Work another little Gloss, commonly call'd *The interlin'd Gloss*, which consists of words added to the Text of the Bible to make it more intelligible; and it is call'd *the interlin'd Gloss*, because it is betwixt the lines of the Text. This Gloss being very short, and inserted only for the Illustration of the obscure words, ought only to Explain exactly what those words mean; yet the Author very often runs upon the Mystical Sence. As he endeavours to be thought a Man of Learning, he sometimes delights in giving of childish and ridiculous Etymologies. Which at that time were admir'd, because true Learning was not then understood.

*Nicholas de Lyra*, so call'd from *Lire* a Town in the Province of *Perche*, is the most Learned and most vers'd in the Scripture style of all those who have had any hand in this Collection. Several affirm, That he had been a Jew, and afterwards turn'd Christian. However it is, this is certain, that he understood Hebrew, and so much of the Rabbinical Hebrew, as to read the *Jews* Commentaries upon the Bible. Which, at that time was hard to find any Persons born in our Religion could do. His great Author is R. *Raschi*, or R. *Salomon Isaaki* commonly call'd *Jarhi*. He often quotes him in his Observations, and most of those who since him have mix'd any Jewish Learning in their Commentaries, have only Copy'd from him. If this Author had follow'd a certain Method of Philosophysing according to *Aristotle's* Principles, which was then in use, he he had succeeded better, altho he is more reserv'd herein than many other Writers of that time. We may give him this Commendation, that no body before him had so thoroughly search'd into the Literal Sence of the Scripture; it would however have been well if he had not so many frivolous things taken from the Rabbins, and that he had taken out of their Books only what might conduce to the clearing of the Scripture.

*Paulus Burgenfis.* There is in the Additions of *Paul* Bishop of *Burgos*, a Criticism upon the Remarks of *Nicholas de Lyra*; as this Author

thor had been a Jew, and had apply'd himself to the Study of the Scripture, he sometimes Corrects the faults of *Lyra*, and lays down good Principles for the understanding of the Bible. But because he has done as commonly they do who Dispute hotly one aginst another, his Book is full of superfluous things; so that we should lose a great deal of time to read it all over. It would be well if we could extract the best, and leave the rest. For Example, it signifies very little whether *De Lyra* Reasons rightly upon Matters of Philosophy, or other Subjects which concern not the Exposition of the Holy Scripture.

*Mathias Dormick* of the Order of *St. Francis*, has in his Re-<sup>Mathias</sup>plys defended *De Lyra* against *Paul* Bishop of *Burgos*.<sup>Dorn.</sup> But these Disputes consisting for the most part in Questions which concern not the Text of the Bible, are of no use to those who would study the Scripture. Besides, this Author understood neither Criticism nor the Hebrew Tongue well enough to judge of the Disputes of *Nicholas de Lyra*, and *Paul* of *Burgos*. Wherefore we find throughout his whole Book nothing but heats and signs of Ignorance: As for *Paul* of <sup>Paul of</sup>*Burgos*, altho he had been a Jew, and had read the Rab-<sup>Burgo.</sup>bins Books, he gives us not always an exact account of them; he says, for Example in the 4 Chap. *Genesis*, where he speaks of the Paraphrase of *Jonathan*, That this Chaldæan Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch* is of as much Authority amongst the *Jews*, as the Text of *Moses*; which is not true. He has very improperly mistook the Author of the *Chaldæan* Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch*, whom some call *Johnathan*, for the other *Johnathan* who is usually suppos'd to be the Author of the Paraphrase upon all the Books of the Scripture, which the *Jews* call Prophetical. I observe this only to shew that neither *Paul* of *Burgos*, nor several others who were at first *Jews*, are wholly free from faults in Matters, wherein they are generally thought to be more understanding than the Christians.

The Collection Printed at *Paris* call'd *Biblia Magna*, seems to be of greater use than the former, for the understanding of the Scripture, forasmuch as the Authors therein inserted keep closer to their Text, and have avoided all frivolous Digressions. This Collection contains the Remarks of *Estius*, *Emanuel Sa, Me-*  
*nachium*, and *Tirinus*. *Estius* enlarges a little more than the others; He

He generally sets down the Father's Literal Explanations, mixing sometimes some Theological Questions; It would have been well if he had been a little more vers'd in Criticism, and that he had better understood the Greek and Hebrew Tongues, that he might have chose the most proper Significations of the Hebrew words, whereas he usually follows the Opinions of others, which makes that he is not altogether exact; As where he says in the beginning of *Genesis* of these words, *Spiritus ferebatur super aquas*, that the *Jews* explain them by a Wind, and that the Ecclesiastical Authors Interpret them better by the Holy Ghost, he is not altogether in the right, because both the Fathers and the *Jews* differ amongst themselves concerning the Explanation of these words; for there are Fathers as well as *Jews* who think they ought to be interpreted by a wind, and there are also *Jews* who thereby understand the Spirit of God.

Eman. Sa  
Menoch.  
Tirin.

As for *Emanuel Sa*, *Menochius*, and *Tirinus*, they have an excellent Method, because they follow exactly the Literal Sence; But I am of opinion that they were not understanding enough in all Points to make an exact Criticism upon the best Interpretations. They seem not to have understood Greek and Hebrew well enough to read the Jewish Commentaries; which would have been very useful to them in the Explanation of the Scripture, and they would have shun'd many faults which they have committed by following the other Interpreters, without having thoroughly examin'd them before hand. For Example, *Emanuel Sa* would not have so boldly asserted, that in Chap. 3. *Gen.* verse 15. where we read in the Vulgar *ipsa conteret*, there are Hebrew Copies which have *Hi ipsa*, for there are no such; and it is through the Error of the Transcriber of the Greek and Latin Copies as we have already observ'd, that we read *ipsa*, because heretofore they read *ipse*. I observe this only to shew, that altho these Authors were Judicious and capable of making a good choice of the best Interpretations upon the Text of the Scripture; yet they were not altogether without fault.

Father De  
la Haye.

Father *De la Haye* of the Order of *St. Francis*, who made this Collection, might have made it less Voluminous, had he not so often repeated the same Interpretations; For these Interpreters usually agree; and then he had done well to have Abridg'd the Matter, and to have set down only what was barely necessary. He might also have added several Illustrations to this Collection

drawn

drawn from the Observations of *Lyra*, and some other Authors. In short, the Author's words ought not to have been set down at length, but only what was most to the purpose, and what was wanting ought to have been supply'd.

The same Father *De la Haye* not being satisfied with the Collection he had made of the Bible into five Volumes, made another yet larger call'd *Biblia Magna*, which contains Nineteen Volumes. But he seems rather in this last Collection to have studied the humouring of his own Vanity, than the being profitable to his Readers. So likewise he commends his Work only for being Voluminous. The Bible of *Alcala*, says he, contains only Three Volumes, That of *London* Six, the Royal Bible Eight, that of *Paris* Ten; whereas my Edition contains Nineteen: He afterwards adds, That all these Bibles together contain only the *Latin*, *Greek*, *Hebrew*, *Samaritain*, *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, *Persian*, and *Aethiopian*; but that in his there is besides all these Languages, the *Sclavonick*, *Gothick*, *Italian*, *Spanish*, and *French*; *Quid tanto dignum feret hic promissor hiatus?* All these many Tongues may be reduc'd to the Latin Translations, which he only sets down, and it is very probable that the Author understood no other Tongue but the Latin. He sets down then all these different Translations, especially the Oriental ones, as he had read them in the Latin Translations, and he commends his Work, in that he sometimes gives Twenty or Thirty Translations of the same Verse. But he had done better if he had not so often repeated the same thing by *Synonymous* terms, and had not fill'd his Book with ridiculous and impertinent Translations, which he usually does, in quoting those of *Malvenda*. What is most commendable in this Author is, that he has endeavour'd to reconcile all these different Translations, & to show the Authority of the Vulgar; but this was a Work above him, and he understood not well enough the Tongues, nor was he sufficiently vers'd in the Study of the Scripture to succeed in so great an undertaking.

Besides the Authors, he had set down in his first Collection, he has added the Observations of *De Lyra*, whence he ought to have cut off what was superfluous. Besides I find not that *De Lyra* has in his Observations compar'd the Latin Translation, with those made from the Hebrew, nor that he has shown that the Vulgar was the best, as Father *De la Haye* in his Preface affirms, If *De Lyra* Compos'd this Work as many have believ'd, it is very different

rent

rent from a Work which we have of his, or else we have it not compleat; for we find he makes therein no Criticism upon the Translations. To conclude, we cannot deny but the Method Father *De la Haye* observes in this Collection, is the best of all: For he at first shows the different ways of Explaining the Scripture Text, then he compares them all together, and gives his Judgment thereupon; and lastly, he sets down the several Literal Explanations of the best Authors. This Method is very exact, and if he had kept close to his design, we could not have had any thing more perfect or useful upon the Scripture.

Lastly to compleat his Work, he has plac'd *Prolegomenas* at the beginning of it, where he Explains at large the Preliminary Questions which are usually put concerning the Text of the Bible and the Translations: But it is probable he understood not most of the Critical Questions he there puts; else he would not have fallen into such gross mistakes. He Collected what he had read in the best Authors, and as he understood not clearly the Subject; it was impossible but he should sometimes be mistaken. I shall only give one Example, whence we may easily judge of his understanding: In *Chap. 1. Section 8.* he enquires whether *Moses* was the Author of the Points which serve at present instead of Vowels in the Hebrew Text; and for the more easie resolving of this difficulty, he supposes that the Ancient Hebrews had no Letters but Consonants, and that the latter *Jews* chose three of these Consonants, to wit *Aleph, Vau* and *Jod* to serve instead of Vowels also, so that *Aleph* serv'd instead of *A*, and *E, Vau* instead of *V* and *O*, and *Jod* instead of *J* and *E*. There is nothing more false than this Supposition concerning these Consonants, which he affirms became Vowels in the latter Ages; we ought then to say, that in all Tongues there always were Vowels, and that in the Hebrew the Letters *Aleph, Vau* and *Jod*, serv'd in the beginning instead of Vowels, before the Invention of Points, which at present supply their place. There are many such faults in his *Prolegomenas*, which plainly show that the Author of this Collection undertook a Work above him.

## CHAP. XII.

*Judgement upon some Authors who have writ Commentaries or Remarks upon the Bible. Where is also shown what Method is to be observ'd in the Explaining of the Scripture.*

After having in the foregoing Chapters shown what Rules the most Learned Fathers have observ'd in the Explaining of the Scripture, it seems to be altogether unnecessary for us to stay any longer upon this Subject, besides that Cathoicks are not permitted to resort to any other Interpreters of the Bible than these Fathers, and thus we need not particularly to examine the Modern Interpreters Method, whose Opinions herein are of no Authority. This has already been declar'd by the Fathers of the Council of *Trent*, who made a Decree against all the Modern Interpretations of many passages of the Scripture, *Ad coercenda pecculantia ingenia*, say these Fathers, *decernit Synodus ut nemo suae prudentiae innixus, in rebus fidei & morum ad adificationem doctrinae pertinentium, sacram Scripturam ad suos sensus contorquens contra sensum quem tenuit, & tenet Sancta Mater Ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu & interpretatione Scripturarum Sanctarum aut etiam contra unanimum consensum Patrum ipsam Scripturam sacram Interpretari audeat.*

If this Decree of the Council of *Trent* had as large an Extent as the signification of the words will bear, we ought to condemn the Method of the most Learned Divines, who since that time have given new Explanations to the words of the Scripture, and have found fault with Expositions of the Fathers as not exact. We ought therefore to distinguish betwixt that which relates purely to the Criticism of the Bible, and what relates to the Universal belief of the Church. The Fathers of the Council condemn'd not the first way of Explaining of the Scripture, but the Innovators only of those times who oppos'd their new Expositions of the Scripture to the generally receiv'd Doctrine of the whole Church.

In a word, the Council condemn'd not the Opinion of Cardinal *Cajetan*, who affirm'd, that we ought not to confine the Interpretation of the Scripture to the Expositions of the Fathers; but that we ought to Interpret the words of the Text as Literally as we can, without relying upon the prejudices of the Fathers. *Si quando occurrerit*, says this Cardinal, *novus sensus textui consonus, nec à sacra Scriptura nec ab Ecclesiæ doctrina, dissonus, quamvis à torrente Doctorum sacrarum alienus, æquos se præbeant censores; Meminerint jus suum unicuique, solis Scripturæ sacræ autoribus reservata est hæc autoritas, ut ideo credamus sic esse quia ipsi ita scripserunt, alios autem (inquit Augustinus) ita lego ut quantolibet sanctitate doctrinæque præpollent, non ideo credam, sic esse quia ipsi ita scripserunt; itaque non detestetur novum Scripturæ sensum ex hoc quod dissonat à priscis doctoribus; sed scrutetur perspicacius textum ac contextum Scripturæ, & si quadrare invenerit, laudet Deum, qui non allegavit Expositionem, Scripturarum sacrarum priscorum Doctorum; sed Scripturæ integræ sub Catholicæ Ecclesiæ censura.* I have set down *Cajetan's* words at length, that we may the better understand his Method in his Commentaries upon the Bible.

Cardinal *Palavicini* does not wholly disallow of this Method of *Cajetan's*, altho he confesses that some persons were scandaliz'd at so bold and hardy an Opinion. He afterwards adds, that there is nothing in this Opinion contrary to the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, which prescrib'd no new Law concerning the Explanation of the Word of God; but declar'd only Heretical what had always been esteem'd Heretical by the Fathers, Popes, and Councils. *Affermo premieramente, ch'il Gaetano quantunque represso per licentioso dâ Medecimi in questoddetto, non proferi giamai sentimento contrario à cio che in quella parte fu disposto dal Concilio Tridentino. Secondamente ch'il concilio non prescriffe ò restrinse con legge nuova il modo d'intendere la parola di Dio; ma dichiaro per ille cito è per ereticale ciò ch'era tale di sua natura, è per tale sempre riputato è dichiarato, d'a padri, d'a pontifici, è d'a concilii.*

It is true that Cardinal *Cajetan's* way of Explaining the Scripture, seems at first to be a little bold, and not respective enough to the Ancient Fathers; but if we seriously examine it, we shall find that he has herein follow'd St. *Augustin's* Rules in his Books of the Doctrine of Christianity. The Innovations of *Luther* and some other Protestants of that time, made some Divines oppose

*Cajetan.*  
Pref. in  
Pentat.

*Palavic.*  
Histor. of  
the Coun.  
of Trent,  
Book 6.  
Chap. 18.

pose *Cajetan's* Opinion, which seem'd too bold, and in some sort to authorize the new Heresies, altho it was in Truth both Orthodox and Conformable to the Doctrine of the Church, who has always left the Interpreters the liberty of enquiring into the Literal Sense of the Scripture, without relying upon the Ancient Doctors Interpretations, but only upon the Doctrine receiv'd and approv'd of throughout the whole Church; and it is this that this Cardinal means by these words; *Novus sensus textui consonus, nec à sacra Scriptura, nec ab Ecclesiæ doctrina dissonus, quamvis à torrente Doctorum sacrarum alienus.* This in short is the Method which is to be observ'd in the Explanation of the Scripture, and by this means we may easily reconcile the Protestants with the Catholics upon this Point, and we may at the same time do *Cajetan's* Justice, who had very much studied the Scripture; and had supply'd by the force of his Wit what he seem'd to want for the thorough understanding of the Scripture.

If *Ambrosius Catharin* had as carefully studied the Scripture as *Cajetan*, he would not have inveigh'd so hotly against this Learned Cardinal in his Observations upon his Commentaries; as when he accuses him of playing the Jew upon the first words of *Genesis*, where *Cajetan* observes that by the Hebrew word *Elohim*, which in this place is in the Plural Number, is not suppos'd the Mystery of the Trinity. *Sixtus* of *Sienna*, who has defended *Cajetan* against *Catharin*, has judiciously observ'd that they who apply this passage to the mystery of the Trinity, do not herein follow the Fathers, but *Peter Lombard*, who touch'd upon this Sense only by the by in his Book of Sentences.

*Gretser* could not endure that *Cajetan* should wholly forsake the Fathers in his Commentaries upon the Psalms, under pretence of Explaining them more Literally, *De Cajetano quid dicam*, says this Jesuit, in *cujus integro super Psalmos Commentario nescio quoties sanctorum Patrum mentio, vel citatio, vel autoritas & sententia appareat.* It is true that *Cajetan* seldom makes use of the Explanation of the Fathers in his Commentaries upon the Scripture, and especially upon the Psalms, because he thought they were of no use for his design, as he himself affirms in an Epistle before his Commentaries upon this Book. *Solus Psalterii sensus*, says this Cardinal speaking to Pope *Clement* the VII. *quem literalem vocant, nulli est adhuc pervius, sed abstrusus; cum fere*

*Cajetan.*  
Pref. in  
Lib. 5.

*Sixt. Sienn.*  
*Bib. Sanct.*  
Lib. 5.  
Annot. 1.

*Gretser*  
Tract. de  
Nov.  
Transl. C. 2.

*Cajet. Ep.*  
ad Clem.  
VII.



*omnes qui Commentarios in illud ediderunt, Mysticos tantum sensus attulerint.*

We ought rather to commend this Cardinal for following the Literal Sense of the Scripture, which in his time was so much neglected, than blame him for not quoting the Fathers Expositions in his Commentaries upon the Bible. He was perswaded that their Expositions were not Literal enough; and therefore he thought fit to go to the Original Hebrew, altho he understood not that Tongue. Wherefore as he was oblig'd to give credit to what they told him who directed him in this Language, he is sometimes mistaken, whether it be that his Masters were not able Men, or that he understood not clearly what they told him. For Example, the Reason he gives in the beginning of his Commentary upon *Genesis*, to show that *Elohim* denotes not Plurality of Persons in God is false, because he supposes that this word has no singular in the Scripture. Which is not true, because we find *Eloha* in the singular. Besides he had not wholly laid aside a certain way of reasoning which is learn'd in the Schools, which suits not always with the Method which we ought to follow in the Explaining of the Scriptures; to which we may add, that the Books of the Modern Protestants which he had read, made him keep a certain *Medium*, which could neither please Protestants nor Catholics. *Certamente que Commentarii*, says Cardinal *Palavacini* in speaking of the Commentaries of *Cajetan non hebber applauso ne da gli Eretici ne da Cattolici*; In a word, it was in a manner a rash action to undertake the Exposition of the Scripture according to the Literal Sense, and by the Originals without understanding the Tongues the Originals were writ in. We have already observ'd that he understood neither Hebrew nor Greek; yet nevertheless in his Preface to the Psalms, where he himself acknowledges his own Ignorance, he mentions only the Hebrew Tongue: but he is generally thought to understand one no more than another.

*Jerom Oleaster* may be much more useful than *Cajetan* for the understanding of the Literal Sense of the Scripture, because he chiefly endeavours, especially in his Commentaries upon the *Pentateuch*, to find out the true and proper Signification of each Hebrew word. He compares the several places of his Text where these words are, that he may the better understand the Genuine signification, and for this purpose he consults the Rabbins,

whom

*Palavic. Hist. of Counc. Book 6. C. 17.*

*Hieron. Oleast. in Pentat.*

whom he very often deserts. But we may truly say, that most of this Work serves only to show how ignorant we are in the Hebrew Tongue, and how much divided the most Learned Interpreters are in this Point. Besides the Author deviates sometimes from the most probable Sense, because he keeps too closely to his Method, and enquires too scrupulously after the proper and Primitive signification of the Hebrew words, searching out the very Etymologies. It would have been well if *Oleaster* had consulted the ancient Interpreters of the Bible, and had consider'd their Translations at the same time as he examin'd the Rabbins Opinions. We may say that he has not always chose the best Interpretation, because he has often affected some particular Opinions.

*Titelman* of the Order of *St. Francis*, who taught the Holy Scripture at *Louvain* in the beginning of the last Century, has in his Commentaries upon the Psalms, joyn'd the Ancient Fathers Method with the Modern Interpreters way, who regard only the Literal Sense. He Explains at first in a large Paraphrase the sense of each Psalm, then he makes Observations by way of Commentary, and he sets down in separate Notes what relates to the Criticism, the various Readings, and the different Interpretations of the Hebrew words, so that this Work of *Titelman's* may be useful to all sort of Persons. As he was of Opinion, that most of the Hebrew words were equivocal, he thought it was absolutely necessary to make Critical Remarks upon the Hebrew Text. *Norunt*, says this Author, *qui Hebraeas literas vel à limine salutarunt & Hebraica Biblia vel à longe inspexerunt, quam frequenter in Sermone Hebrao id usu veniat, sic diversas ex equivocatione verborum sententias educere.* He seems not to have thoroughly understood the Hebrew Tongue, in that he seldom does any thing but quote some places of *St. Jerom's* Latin Translation from the Hebrew, and the new Latin Translation of *Felix Pratensis* from the Hebrew Text.

*Bonfrerius* the Jesuit seems to have the best compar'd the Ancient Translations, and especially that of the *Septuagint*, and the Vulgar with the Modern ones, thereby to make an exact Sense. He generally makes a judicious choice, and he would have yet better succeeded, if he had better understood the Oriental Tongues, and had not been so Copious in his Expositions. But it is usual for those who make Commentaries upon the Bi-

*Titelm. Elucid. & Annot. in Psalm.*

*Præf. in Annot.*

*Bonfr. in Pentat.*

ble to mix therewith some Learning and Questions foreign to the Text.

Cornel. à  
Lapide.

The Commentaries of *Cornelius à Lapide* are herein also faulty; yet nevertheless this Author in the beginning of his Work promises to be short, and to Collect in few words, what had been observ'd by others more at large. I know that these sort of Commentaries which are full of Learning please many People, and above all the Preachers; but they cannot be pleasing to Judicious Persons, who desire to have every thing Treated of in its proper place.

Alphon.  
Toftat.

Altho *Alphonfus Toftat* a Spaniard, is also very Copious in his Commentaries upon the Scripture, and that he is usually said to be *qui scibile discutit omne*, he is however very happy in his Digressions, so that we may profit by the reading of him, because he is Learned and well vers'd in the Scripture Style. He makes many Questions concerning his Text. But he sometimes carries things too far, and good part of his Commentaries might have been left out without being ever the worse, because there are too many superfluous things.

Perer.

*Pererius* the Jesuit, has made a large Book of Questions upon *Genesis*, wherein he has shown a great deal of Learning; and altho he sticks not close to the words of his Text; he is for all that very useful; because he very Judiciously Resolves the Questions he propounds, and Illustrates the great Difficulties in the Scripture. He endeavours chiefly to give the Opinions of the Fathers, of which he has made a Collection. But as the Fathers follow'd not always the Literal Sence of the Scripture; most of his Work is of no use to those who enquire after the Literal Sence of the Bible.

Serar.

*Serarius* another Jesuit, had all the necessary qualities for the interpreting of the Scripture; for besides that, he very well understood both Greek and Hebrew, and much better than they who usually make Commentaries upon the Scripture, he had studied this Matter, and was well vers'd in the Scripture style; he could read the Rabbins Books, as he made appear in his Disputes against *Drusius*, and *Scaliger*; but he is not Critick enough, and he mixes too much unprofitable Learning in his Commentaries and Questions. In a word, altho this Author was very Learned, he is not always exact. His Judgment and Understanding is better seen in his *Prolegomena's* to the Bible, where

where he discusses several Questions very judiciously and in few words.

*Leon Castro* a Spanish Dr. has made a Commentary upon the Prophet *Isaiah*, which may be useful to them who Study Divinity, and look for it in the Books of the Fathers. He endeavours chiefly to defend the two Ancient Translations which have been receiv'd by the Church, and if he had not wholly forsaken the Rabbins and Modern Interpreters of the Scripture his Work had been more Compleat. But he thought that their Works obstructed the truth of Christianity, or rather as he desir'd to be thought very Learned in the Hebrew Tongue, which he understood but indifferently, he declar'd himself against the Rabbins and Hebricians, to whom he oppos'd the Explanations of the Fathers with which his Book is full.

*Ribera* the Jesuit, who has made a large Commentary upon the Twelve little Prophets, is methinks more Judicious than *Leon Castro*; for he joyns the Modern Interpreters with the Ancient ones, and the Fathers, and gives the Sence which he thinks is most Literal. He endeavours chiefly to Explain the style and ways of speaking of the Prophets. His great Author is *St. Jerom*, whose Works he has seriously read, and he has given Rules for the understanding of this Father's way of Writing, which seems to be full of Contradictions. To conclude; He is no very great Critick, and understood but very indifferently the Greek and Hebrew Tongues; but his Judgment made amends in some sort for this defect. I speak not here of the Moralities, or Allegories, or other Mystical Sences which this Author and several others have inserted in their Commentaries, because it is besides my purpose.

*Augustin Steuchus* of *Engubio*, who understood Greek and Hebrew well enough to read the Greek Fathers and the Rabbins Books, endeavour'd chiefly in his Explanation of the *Pentateuch*, to justify the Vulgar Translation which he calls *St. Jerom's*; He shows that it agrees better with the Hebrew Text than the Greek *Septuagint*, and that the Church had reason to prefer this new Vulgar Translation before the Ancient one. But this Author has not done the *Septuagint* all the Justice he ought to have done. They are not so Ignorant of the Hebrew Tongue as he fancies. He had done better not to have so much inveigh'd against this Ancient Greek Translation, which has been of as great Authority

rity in the Church as St. *Jerom's* new one, besides he seems to rely too much upon the Modern Hebrew, and he understood not how to reconcile the *Septuagint* with the Modern Interpreters. He is however worthy the reading, because he is Critick good enough, and he applies himself to the Literal Sence, and to the finding out of the proper Signification of the Hebrew words.

He confesses in his Preface to the Psalms, that there are many Equivocal words in the Hebrew Tongue; but he observes that this fault is usual also in other Tongues, and that the Books of *Homer*, *Pindar*, and *Sophocles*, are full of such Equivocations which make the Interpreters of these Authors to differ. There is however a great deal of difference betwixt the Hebrew and Greek Tongues in this Point. The many Greek Books which we have, are of great help in the Explaining of the hard words of some Greek Authors; whereas we have no Books of pure Hebrew but the Bible, for the Works of the Ancient *Jews* are writ in a barbarous *Chaldee*, except the *Misna* which is the Text of the *Talmud*, which is in Rabbinical Hebrew, which is not altogether impure. Besides as we have already observ'd the Hebrew, and other Oriental Tongues have all of them these Imperfections; they are full of Equivocations, which are impossible to be Corrected.

*Bellarmin's* Method in his Commentary upon the Psalms is very excellent and worthy him. He examines the Hebrew Text, which is the Original, then the two Ancient Translations authoriz'd by the Church. He is not however Critick enough, and he seems to understand but indifferently the Hebrew; so that he sometimes is mistaken. As he writ after *Genebrard*, he took most of what relates to Grammar and Criticism from him, by altering only of some things. There are also some places which he might have Explain'd more Literally, and more according to the Historical Sence: But it is very probable that he would not do that, to the end his Commentary might be more useful to the Christians.

*Genebrard* without doubt understood Hebrew and the Criticism of the Scripture better than *Bellarmin*. He is not however in his Commentaries upon the Psalms so exact as one could wish for. His Method which is the same with *Bellarmin's*, is praise-worthy, because he defends in many places the *Septuagint* and

and Vulgar Translations against the Modern Hebricians, who rely too much upon the Authority of the Rabbins; But he has not all the Moderation requir'd in an Interpreter who ought to take no side. Besides the faults in most of his Works plainly show that he understood not Hebrew so well as usually he is thought to do.

Mr. *De Muis* the King's Hebrew Professor at *Paris*, has writ a Commentary upon the Psalms, wherein he keeps close to the Letter and Grammar. His chief design was to give the Rabbins Explanations wherein he has well succeeded, and this suited with his Profession. He applies however with the Church several Psalms to our Saviour, even in an Historical Sence, and gives his Judgment upon the several Interpretations of the Rabbins. To conclude, many things might be left out of this Commentary, which make it appear mean; in a word it is not Corrected.

*Malvanda* of the Order of St. *Dominick* who made a barbarous Translation of most of the Old Testament, has joyn'd thereto Commentaries, or rather Literal Notes which are worth the reading, altho there are several superfluous things. His design was to give all the different Interpretations of the Hebrew Text, which made him set down some far from the true Sence, and not at all probable. He relies sometimes too much upon Etymologies, and such like Niceties of Grammar. This Author in some things has imitated Cardinal *Cajetan*, both in his Translations and in his Commentary, with this difference only, that he could choose himself the different Interpretations, because he understood Hebrew, whereas *Cajetan*, who neither understood Hebrew nor Greek, was obliged to rely upon the Credit of those whom he consulted.

*Mariana's Scholia's* or Notes upon the Old Testament, may also be useful for the understanding of the Literal Sence of the Scripture, because he chiefly endeavour'd to find out the proper Signification of the Hebrew words; Thus in the beginning of *Genesis*, he has judiciously observ'd, that the Hebrew word *Bara*, which is usually Translated to Create, does not according to its proper signification, signifie to make out of nothing, as it is usually thought to signifie, and that the Greek and Latin Authors who invented this word *Create*, could not apply this Sence to it, since what they at present call *Creation* or *Production*

*out of Nothing*, was not understood by the Hebrews. Altho these Notes are sufficiently Abridg'd, he might for all that have let alone some Observations which show only his Learning, but illustrate not at all the Text. He is not however often subject to these sort of Digressions, and one may say that *Mariana* is one of the most Learned and Judicious Scholiasts we have upon the Bible. It is true that he understood but indifferently both Greek and Hebrew, but his Ingenuity and great pains supply'd this defect, He usually chooses the best Sense, and he is not tedious in the relating of the different Translations. He often quotes an Ancient Copy of the Vulgar, which he calls *Gothick*, which was heretofore us'd by the Churches of *Spain*.

Jacob  
Gord.  
Comment.  
in Script.

Father *Gordon* the Jesuit has writ Observations upon the Old Testament by way of Commentaries, wherein he keeps close to the Literal Sense of the Text. However he does not only give Literal Notes, but he has also given some Theological Arguments, mixing some Controversie therewith, and observing *Calvin's* and some other Hereticks false Interpretations. He defend's the Vulgar as much as possibly he can, and to make his Work more compleat, he Treats of Chronology; wherefore there are few Commentaries upon the Scripture where there are so many things Abridg'd, and yet he is not tedious, only those perhaps who enquire after the bare Exposition of the Scripture Text will not be pleas'd with all the Consequences he draws from Divinity. But this may be useful to those who Study Divinity, and will defend themselves against the Subtilties of the Protestants, whose Faith is grounded upon Consequences drawn only from words of the Scripture. This Author however might have avoided several subtil Questions which relate only to School-Divinity.

Philipp.  
Comm. in  
Ose.

I know not whether we ought to reckon Father *Philippcau* in the Jesuit, amongst those who have made Commentaries upon the Bible; who has indeed Compos'd a great Book upon the Prophet *Osea*, but he has scarcely Explain'd the four first Chapters. Most of his Book consists in long Digressions, and Matters Foreign to his Subject: For Example upon the first words of the Prophet *Verbum Domini*, he gives all the different ways of Explaining the word *Verbum*, he leaves out nothing which he had read either in the Grammarians or Divines, concerning  
the

the *Word*; He Treats of the Proprieties of the Divine Word, and of the Mysteries of the Trinity: then afterwards Explaining the Name of the Prophet *Osea* Son of *Beer*, he gives you all the Etymologies he can find of this Name; and because the word *Beer* signifies a *Well*, he has Collected whatever he could find in the Works of the Fathers and Jewish Authors concerning the word *Well*. In a word, altho his Commentary is very Learned, he shows very little Judgment therein, and most of the Learning is out of its place. It would have been more proper for this Author, not to have run so much upon things which are ordinarily found in other Books, but to have Publish'd what particular things he had in the Greek Manuscripts, which he quotes upon the Prophets. But we have sufficiently spoken of the Catholick Doctors, who have made Commentaries or Remarks upon the Bible; Let us now pass to the Protestant Authors, and see what Method they have observ'd in the Expounding of the Scripture.

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### CHAP. XIII.

*The Method observ'd by the Protestants in their Explanations of the Scripture. The Rules of Matthias Flacius Illyricus in his Book Intituled, The Scripture Key, particularly discuss'd.*

BY the Name of Protestants, I understand not only those of *Luther's* Sect, but generally all those who in this last Age have left the Religion of their Fathers to follow the Innovations of *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Zuinglius*, and some other Heads of a Party. In a word, these last Innovators agree all herein, in that they receive the Holy Scripture only for the foundation of their Religion.

ligion. Because Religion, they say, ought to be grounded upon the pure Word of God, and not upon the word of Men. But under this pretence, of following only the pure Word of God, they have oftner follow'd Consequences which they have pretended were immediately drawn from the Scripture, than this pure Word of God: And this is the reason why altho they all agree in their first Principle, they are nevertheless of different Opinions. However they affirm, that the Scripture is in it self plain and easie to be understood. In which they show themselves to be mistaken, since they draw different Conclusions from one and the same Principle, which they suppose is plain and evident.

Luther.

Luther had recourse to this Principle in the utmost Extremity, when he found himself press'd by the Authority of the Fathers, of the Councils, and Tradition: for finding he could not answer all these Authorities, he betook himself to the Scripture only, which he Expounded after his own way; and for the better opposing the Fathers and Councils alledg'd against him, he answer'd, That Religion coming only from God, could be contain'd only in the Holy Scriptures, within which compass his Word was circumscrib'd; whereas the Fathers and Bishops assembled in Councils, were Men liable to be deceiv'd. As then the first Principle, whence we pretend to draw plain and evident Conclusions ought to be plain it self, Luther was oblig'd to lay down for his first and chief Maxim, That the Scripture was in it self clear in matters of Faith, and that therefore there was no necessity of our running to Tradition, or the Interpretations of the Fathers, who might be deceiv'd, God only being infallible. Wherefore Luther, and all the other Protestants make use of the Authority of the Fathers, and Councils, for the clearing of their Doctrine, only where they find them agree with the Scripture, which is their only Rule.

As we have already observ'd the Jews and Fathers Method in Explaining of the Scripture, I thought it was fit for me to do the same thing in relation to the Protestants, by giving some of their most famous Authors Rules upon this Subject, and examining some of their best Interpreters.

Matthias

Matthias Flacius Illyricus a famous Protestant has Compos'd <sup>Clavis</sup> two great Volumes upon this Subject. In the First, he Expounds <sup>Script.</sup> by way of Dictionary the ways of speaking in the Bible; and the <sup>Matth.</sup> Second contains several small Treatises concerning the Scripture <sup>Flac. Illyr.</sup> style; thereby to know how it ought to be Explain'd. We shall <sup>Edit. Basil.</sup> speak chiefly of the last, where the Author has given all the <sup>An. 1567.</sup> Rules which he thought were necessary for the understanding of the different Expressions in the Scripture. He falls first upon <sup>In Praefat.</sup> the Catholick Doctors, who affirm, That the Scripture being obscure, is not of it self a sufficient ground for the deciding of all Controversies in Religion, which he calls Impious and Blaphemous: *Horrendum in Modum blasphemant vociferantes Scripturam esse Obscuram, ambiguam, non etiam sufficientem ad plenam institutionem hominis Christiani ad Salutem.* But the History of the Hebrew Text, and the chief Translations which we have Treated of in the two First Books, clearly show the Truth of this Principle which the Catholicks have laid down against the Protestants: Besides, that Luther, as has already been shown, is of Opinion that the Hebrew Tongue being lost, the Jews could not restore it; and that most of the words of this Tongue are to this day Equivocal.

Flacius says in the Second place that the Catholicks affirm That the Scriptures ought to be Explain'd by the Fathers, to which he opposes the Authority of St. Hilary and St. Augustin, who say that the Scripture ought to be Explain'd by it self, And that the obscure places ought to be clear'd by the plain ones. But herein he does the Catholicks wrong, for as much as they own this last Rule as well as he, and receive the Father's Explanations only in things relating to the generally receiv'd Faith throughout the whole Church, as has already been observ'd in the beginning of the foregoing Chapter, in speaking of the Commentaries of Cardinal Cajetan.

Thirdly, he speaks of the Father's Ignorance in the Holy Tongues, and of their wresting of the true Sence of the Text, to Allegorical ones of their own inventing: but it is certain that neither Luther nor Calvin understood the Holy Tongues so well as Origen and St. Jerom, who kept close to the Literal Sence of the Scripture as well as to Allegorics. As since the Allegorical Sence has been Authoriz'd by the Apostles, the Fathers methinks might imitate them herein, and

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and they have not by this hinder'd us from taking the Literal Sence.

Fourthly, *Illyricus* in the same Preface affirms, we ought not to follow the Fathers, because they Translate differently the same place of Scripture: but if this Argument held good, we ought to lay aside all the Modern Interpreters of the Bible who disagree about the Explanation of the same places. Wherefore *Flacius* says nothing judiciously or without prejudice concerning the Father's Explanations, which the Catholics are not oblig'd to rely upon as infallible Rules. Let us see if this Author speaks better in the Body of his Work.

Flac. Illyr. *De Ratione Cognoscendi sacras literas.* In his first Treaty which is Intituled, *The way how to understand the Holy Scriptures*, He tells us what causes the Difficulties in the Holy Scriptures, and he gives 51 Reasons, and afterwards tells us how to clear these Difficulties; I shall relate only some of his Reasons, especially those which seem to be of greatest use. He says as for the Doctrine contain'd in the Holy Scripture, most Men, even the most Judicious, are as it were stupid, and prone thro' I know what evil inclination to judge amiss, and that they who have writ Commentaries upon these Books have made them more obscure, either thro' their Ignorance in the Holy Tongues, or by reasoning too much like Schoolmen. Altho' these Observations are in some sort true, yet the Application which *Flacius* thence makes is false; for he supposes that the Catholics designedly encreased in their Commentaries the Difficulties of the Scripture, that they might maintain their Opinions by Arguments taken out of *Aristotle's* Philosophy.

He moreover says, that there is nothing more liable to Alteration than Tongues; and therefore it is hard to understand the old words and expressions of a Tongue; which he proves by good Examples; then he adds, That every Writer has a particular Style, which one cannot easily be acquainted with, that it is hard to understand the figurative Style, that every Tongue has peculiar figurative Expressions, and especially the Hebrew. That the want of Books writ in this Tongue, makes the Scripture yet harder to be understood, besides that the Hebrews often speak but half words, whereas in other places they repeat several times the same thing.

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The changing of Tenses, Persons, and Numbers in the Scripture, makes it also very obscure; besides that the things there Treated of being sometimes very Sublime, are very hard to be understood. The Holy Authors sometimes pass from one thing to another, and are a great while before they return.

No one can deny but all these Reflections are very true, and that at the same time they ruine the great Principle of the Protestants, who affirm, That the Scripture is clear of it self. Wherefore the Author after having discovered the evil, Endeavours to apply necessary Remedies, which is the chief design of his Treatise, wherein he shows he very well understands the Scripture style; but that does not prove that it is easie to be understood. On the contrary nothing can convince us more of its obscurity than the Maxims he lays down, most of which depend upon prejudice. Thus first of all he supposes that we ought to have recourse to God who is the Father of Lights; and that we ought to be instructed in the fundamental Truths of Religion by able Persons. But whence can we have this help but from the Church, which alone preserves the true Religion?

As for the Rules he sets down for the Explaining of an obscure place by another more plain, and for the having of good Translations of the Bible, they are to be found in the Father's Books. As for many other Rules which he lays down in the same Treatise, they are but ill grounded, and depend upon the prejudice which one may have suck'd in. In a word, he says, that we ought first of all to be instructed in the Truths of Religion, because the Exposition of the Scriptures ought to agree with our Faith; and yet he has no other Master for the instructing of him in the Truths of Christianity than his Patriarch *Luther*, as if he alone had preserv'd the Faith of his Fathers. Thus the Rule he here sets down, is very good and useful, but he applies it wrong; and that we may make a right use of it by applying it to the Church; it is fit we should set it down in its proper terms; *Omnia qua de Scriptura aut ex Scriptura dicuntur debent esse consona Chædhistica Summa aut articulis fidei.*

I pass by many other Rules which *Flacius* has at large set down in the same Treatise, which may be of use both

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to Catholics and Protestants. He has taken many of them out of St. *Jerom*, and St. *Augustine*. If this Author had not been so preposessed with the prejudice of *Lutheranism*, which has sometimes caus'd him to apply things wrong, he would have been of great Reputation.

Besides the several Rules which he has Explain'd for the better understanding the Sence of the Scripture, he takes notice of the different Sences which may be apply'd thereto, and observes when they may be us'd. For Example, he gives three Reasons to show when we ought to follow the Allegorical Sence; First, If we discern any fallity in following the Literal: Secondly, When we find any absurdity in the Grammatical: And Thirdly, when the Grammatical Sence is contrary either to Faith or good Manners. Wherefore we ought first of all to understand the Truths of Religion, and the true Maxims of Morality. He judiciously observes, that they who keep not to the History of the Scripture generally run into Allegories, and that in his time the *Anabaprists* made use of this guile for the Establishing by these sort of Quirks their false Maxims amongst the Ignorant People. This is the Method which the Protestants generally affirm ought to be observ'd in the Expounding of the Scripture, let us now examine some of their best Commentaries upon the Scripture, that we may more particularly understand their way of Interpreting the Bible.

## C H A P.

## C H A P. XIV.

*A Criticism of the Chief Protestant Authors who have made Commentaries or Remaaks upon the Holy Scripture.*

**L**uther the German Protestants Patriarch was not satisfied with making a Translation of the whole Bible both from the Hebrew and Greek into his Mother Tongue; but thought he ought to Explain the Word of God according to his own Method, for the better fixing of their Minds whom he had drawn to his side. But this Patriarch could succeed no better in his Commentaries upon the Bible than his Translation. He made both one and the other with too little Consideration, and he ve very often consults only his own prejudice. That he might be thought a Learned Man he spends time to no purpose in confuting of others Opinions, which he fancies are ridiculous, he mixes very improperly, Theological Questions, and several other things with his Commentaries, so that they may rather be call'd Divinity Readings and Disputes, than real Commentaries. This may be seen in his Exposition upon *Genesis*, where there are many idle Digressions. He thought that by reading of Morality, and bawling against those who were not of his Opinion, he might very much illustrate the Word of God; but one may easily see by his own Books that he was but a turbulent and passionate Man, who had only a flashy wit, and quick Invention. There is nothing Great or Learned in his Commentaries upon the Bible, every thing is low and mean; and as he had studied Divinity, he has rather Compos'd a rapsody of Theological Questions, than a Commentary upon the Scripture Text. To which we may add, that he wanted understanding, and that he usually follow'd his Senses rather than his Reason; For Example, can any thing be more foolish than his Exposition of the Serpent in Chap. 3. *Gen.*? He affirms, That *the Serpent before his Punishment was a handsom Creature, and went upon*

*Mart. Luther.*

*Martin Luther. Com. in Cap. 3. Gen. Edit. Lat. Norib. An. 1552.*

upon two feet. He moreover assures us, That before the Deluge there was no Rainbow, and that God created it for those very  
 Gen. C. 9. Reasons which are set down in Chap. 9. Gen. This shows how little he had studied the Scripture style, and how ignorant he was of the Symbolical Sence thereof.

As he was no great great Grammarian, nor understood Hebrew well enough to read the Rabbins Books, he contemn'd their Interpretations, and laid down as a Rule that we ought to explain the words of the Bible by the things there spoken, and not the things by the words. This Maxim which he assures us he has taken from St. Hilary, and the Master of Sentences is indeed a very good one; but it may deceive us, especially if we are prejudic'd therewith. It is farther necessary for us to understand as much as possibly we can the proper Signification of the words, and afterwards to consider the things. We ought not to separate one from the other, wherefore Luther was mistaken in Explaining the Scripture according to his prejudice in Religion, and neglecting the Grammar. He himself has acknowledged how necessary Grammar was in Chap. 16. Gen where  
 Comm. in Gen. 4. after having said many things against the Rabbins, who keep close to Grammar, he concludes he does not condemn them upon this account. *Sed nisi, says he, cum Grammatica etiam ipsas res discas, nunquam fies bonus Doctor.* Then he afterward adds this other Maxim, That the Grammar ought to be fitted to the things, and not the things to Grammar, *Grammatica quidem necessaria est & vera sed ea non debet regere res, sed servire rebus.* But under this pretence he follows his own Notions and neglects the Grammar, which he does not closely enough observe.

As then he was not able to make Commentaries upon the Scripture, according to the Letter and Grammar, he generally runs upon Questions and frivolous Remarks. He has follow'd this Method in his Explanation of some Psalms, which he calls *Operationes in Psalmos.* And he at first confesses, that he is not sure that he has given the true sence of the Psalms, although he is  
 Luth. Oper. in Psal. Edit. Lat. Gene. An. 1690. Præf. persuaded that he has set down nothing of Untruth. Then for the better cloaking of his Ignorance, he gives this Maxim of St. Augustin; That no body ever spoke so as to be understood by every one, and therefore the Holy Ghost only thoroughly understands the meaning of his words; afterwards he cites St. Augustin,

stin, St. Jerom, St. Athenasius, St. Hilary, and Cassiodore, who have said many things which were really true upon the Psalms, yet deviated from the true and proper Sence; and for the Conclusion of his Argument, and justifying at the same time his Ignorance, he says, it is both rash and imprudent for any man to believe that he thoroughly understands any one Book of the Scripture, *Scio impudentissima temeritatis esse eum, qui audeat profiteri unum Librum Scriptura à se in omnibus partibus intellectum.* ibid.

No one can deny but these Reflections are both good and true ones; but Luther made them only for the defending of himself from what might be objected against him, viz. That he rather set down his own Imaginations upon the Psalms, than a true Exposition of the Word of God. In a word, his whole work is full of Allegories and false Maxims, as upon these words in Psalm the 2d. *Reges eos in virga ferrea.* After having considered the Three Corners of the Cross, which according to him are Poverty, Humility, and Patience, he adds upon these other following words, *Et nunc reges intelligite,* that the Jews were  
 Psalm 2. 9. more oblig'd to obey their Priests, than the Christians, who  
 ibid. v. 10. under the new Law are all Priests; and being instructed by the Holy Ghost, are not oblig'd to obey Ecclesiastical Powers. And lastly, to conclude, he adds these other words, *In novo Testamento sic sunt audiendi Superiores quicumq; ut liberum relinquatur cuiq; infimo de Superioris sententia in his qua sunt fidei.* The reason he here gives of this difference, is because the old Law consisted but in Exterior Ceremonies, and so the Errors which the Priest might commit were not dangerous; whereas the Law of the New Testament consists in things Spiritual, and Matters of Faith, and therefore, every one ought to take care that the Ecclesiastical Powers do not err: *In Ecclesia ubi res Spiritus & fidei agitur, omnium prorsus interest observare ne Sacerdos erret.* Thus we see that Martin Luther has Expounded the Scripture rather according to the false prejudices which he was possess'd with, than to the truth of the Text; and to prepossess his Readers, he says at the beginning of his Book, that altho he has not always set down the true Sence, he nevertheless has inserted nothing but Truth.

Calvin the French Protestants Patriarch, shews more Wit and Judgment in his Commentaries upon the Scripture than Luther;  
 Calvin.

ther; his Arguments are however too subtle, and he seems rather to maintain his Religion by the Consequences which he draws from the Text of the Bible, than by the Text it self. As he was us'd to Preach Morality to the People, and make Divinity Readings, he has fill'd his Commentaries therewith. He applies most things according to his prejudices, and the Disputes which he had with several Persons. This we may see in his Commentary upon *Genesis*, as also in all his others, because he is pretty equal in his Method.

He is however more reserv'd than *Luther*, and takes care of using weak proofs, whereby his Enemies may have any advantage over him. Wherefore he inveighs not as *Luther* does against the *Jews* and *Antitrinitarians*, who affirm, That the mystery of the Trinity cannot be prov'd by these first words of *Genesis*, *God created*; because the Hebrew word which signifies *God*, is joyn'd in the Plural with the Verb to *Create* in the Singular. On the contrary he largely confutes this Opinion, and judiciously adds in speaking of this Expression, *Monendi sunt Lectores ut sibi à violentis ejusmodi Glossis caveant*. We find him however commit almost the same faults in his Commentaries as *Luther* does; for he seems to have had no other design but the maintaining of his own Opinions, and the confuting of those who oppos'd him: So that in these sort of Books we learn not so much the Word of God, as the prejudices of the Interpreters. As they would not rely upon Tradition for the maintaining of their Faith, they were oblig'd to shew it out of the Scripture, and consequently to rely upon Argumentation; this we may plainly see in the Commentaries of *Calvin*, which are full of subtle consequences drawn from the Scripture Text; and thus he may very easily prepossess the Minds of his Readers, who understand not fully their Religion. Altho *Luther* understood Hebrew better than *Calvin*, who understood hardly any more than the Characters, this last however is the most exact, because he understood better how to consider what he read in other Authors; nevertheless as he was not vers'd in the Study of Criticism, and the Greek and Hebrew Tongues, it was impossible but that he should sometimes be mistaken in the proper Signification of words. The observation that he makes in the beginning of *Genesis*, upon the Hebrew Verb *Bara*, which is usually Translated to *Create*, is an evident proof hereof; for he boldly asserts,

Gen. 1.

Calv.  
Comm. in  
Gen. Ch. I.

asserts, that this word signifies only *to make out of nothing*: whence he takes occasion to inveigh against those who admit of an Eternal Matter, as a *Chaos* whence God produc'd this visible World. It is true that God made the World out of Nothing, and that the *Chaos* or Matter of the Ancient Philosophers is a meer Fable; but we cannot prove it from this passage of *Genesis*, unless we joyn therewith the Tradition we have of the Creation of the World. On the contrary, if we rely barely upon the Scripture Text as it is Translated by the Ancient Interpreters, and by the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we ought rather to suppose that there was an invisible Matter, before the Creation, as we have already observ'd. Besides *Calvin*, Expounding *Chap. 1. Gen. Vers. 21*, where the Hebrew word *Bara* does not signify *to Create*, slyes to I know not what Subtleties for the confirming his former Exposition; which thing he usually does in his Commentaries upon the Scriptures, because he often Expounds it according to his prejudice, and not to the proper signification of the words, which he often wrests, the better to make it agree with his Opinions.

Epist. ad  
Heb. 6. 11.  
Verse 3.

To conclude, *Calvin* being very Ingenious we find in his Commentaries upon the Scripture, something which pleases us on the sudden; and as he endeavour'd chiefly how to understand Men, he has fill'd his Books with a certain Morality which strikes us, and he strives to make his Morality agree with his Text. If he had been less violent and had not been desirous of being the head of a Party, he might have been very useful to the Church. He has the Skill, or rather the Malice of wresting the true Sence of his Text to make it agree with his prejudice. He lets slip no occasion of railing against the Church of *Rome*, and her Ceremonies; and thus one part of his Commentaries upon the Scripture is full of superfluous Exclamations; which however were of use to him in the stirring up of the People against their lawful Superiors. In a word, he passes by nothing which may support his Cause, which thing he has chiefly endeavour'd; wherefore he disguises not the Truth so grossly as *Luther* does; he endeavours at least to make what he asserts seem probable, and he has affected a lofty style, which gives the greater Authority to his Conceptions: To which we may add, that there is hardly any Author who has better understood the meanness of the Creature since the fall; and as he chiefly endeavours to observe the

the failures of Mankind, he affects the heart; whereas most of *Luther's* Reflections are only vain Speculations, and ridiculous Disputes. *Calvin* however has this fault, that he runs too much upon the meanness of the state of Man since the Fall, and to have left him herein; without taking notice of the state of Grace.

*Zuinglius*, who was also the head of a Sect, which is call'd after his Name, is very plain in his Commentaries upon the Bible, and seems to be very little vers'd in the Study of Criticism. Altho he was more modest than these two other Protestant Patriarchs, which we have just now spoke of, he however commits the same faults which they do, and follows his own Prejudices. He is herein Modest, that he seems not wholly to abandon the Ancient Latin Interpreter, which had been so long Authoriz'd by the whole Western Church. Having then made a new Latin Translation of the Prophet *Isaiab*, he Publish'd it with this Ancient Latin Interpreter, commonly call'd the Vulgar. He has call'd this new Latin Translation of *Isaiab*, *Complanatio Isaiæ Prophetæ*. And as he was oblig'd to make an Apology for this new Translation, he observes in the Preface what Authors he has chosen to be his Guides in so difficult an undertaking, *Magistros*, says he, *Multos habui Hebraeos, Græcos, & Latinos*: as if he had equally follow'd both the Ancient and Modern Interpreters: and a little after he adds, *Inveniebam apud Septuaginta quæ Hieronimus ignorasse videbatur, & contra apud Hieronimum multa quæ isti ignoraverunt*. This Method is without doubt the right one, but the Author was not well enough exercis'd in the Criticism of the Bible for executing thoroughly his design; besides, these first Patriarchs of the Modern Reformations, could not spend time enough for works of this Nature; they spent their time wholly in Morality, and Divinity Readings, which all their Commentaries upon the Bible are full of.

Having spoke of these three the most famous Protestant Patriarchs Method in their Commentaries upon the Bible, it is fit we should examine the Method of their Disciples.

*Mollerus* who read upon the Holy Scripture, immediately after the Reformation in the University of *Wittenberg*, has publish'd a large Commentary upon the Psalms, with a new Latin Translation of that Book, which *Beza* has regulated himself by, in

in his Paraphrase upon the Psalms in Verse. This Author is very clear both in his Commentaries and Translation; but his style is too Copious, and he spends many words in the Expressing of few things: In which he imitates the Rhetoricians, who delight in Declamations, besides he is sometimes tedious in the Analysis upon the Parts of each Psalm. He neglects neither the Literal nor Grammatical Sence, when he fancies it necessary for the Illustration of his Text; and altho he is the same way faulty as most of the other Protestants, he seems however to be more moderate than *Luther* or *Calvin*. He chiefly endeavours to make known the Truths of Christianity, and to lay down Maxims for Morality, from whence he sometimes makes some superfluous Digressions. At the beginning of each Psalm he has set down the Contents thereof at large, which Explain the Sence very clearly.

*Nicholas Galatius*, who was a Minister at *Geneva* at the same time with *William Farel*, *John Calvin*, and *Peter Viret*, has in his Commentary upon *Exodus* follow'd *Calvin's* Method, by giving in short the Literal Sence, and afterwards adding thereto some Morality; all these first Reformers not well understanding either Criticism, or the Holy Tongues, apply'd themselves wholly to Divinity and Morality. Their Discourses were Polite and Eloquent, that they might the better persuade the People to whom they Preach'd their new Doctrine. Therefore we find no exact Criticism of the Scripture in any of the Commentaries of these first Reformers, who spent most of their time in making of Sermons or Divinity Readings.

*Peter Martyr a Florentine*, who was call'd into *England* at the beginning of the Reformation under *Edward* the Sixth, and who afterwards taught the Holy Scriptures at *Zurich*, has also made several Commentaries upon the Historical Books of the Bible, which can be of no great use for the understanding of the Literal Sence; because they are full of Common Places and Questions which he draws from the Words of his Text. It is probable that as he was a florid Man, he follow'd this Method to show both his Learning and Eloquence; whereas if he had only kept close to his Text, he would not have had the opportunity of speaking so much, or of resolving so many curious Questions as he has started in his Commentaries, and afterwards falls a railing. Thus in the beginning of his Commentary upon



Judges 1. 17. upon the Book of *Judges*, speaking of *Adoni Bezek*, who had cut off the hands and feet of 70 of his Neighbouring Kings, after having observ'd that at that time every City had a King, he runs upon the Ambition of our present Princes; whose chief care is to increase the number of their Subjects: *Tantâ hodie, says he, Monarcha flagrant ambitione, ut non quot possint regere provideant, sed id unice spectent ut quamplurimos regant;* and he afterwards applies this same reflection to Bishops, who greedily search after great Bishopricks, thereby to have the greater Revenue. *Episcopi omnibus modis id ambiunt, ut Dioceses habeant quam amplissimas, à quibus licet nunquam eas inspiciant, uberrimos fructus capiunt.* In a word, the Commentaries of *Peter Martyr* upon the Bible are full of long Digressions, and he endeavours throughout to shew himself a Learned Man. For Example, In this very same Chapter of *Judges*, upon the account only of one word, he makes a long Discourse concerning Gyants, wherein he sets down whatever he had read upon this Subject; as also upon the account of the Hebrew word *Mas*, *Tribute*; which is often us'd in this Chapter, he makes a long Digression concerning the rise of the *Mas*, wherein he Explains all the parts thereof.

*Musculus* in Psalm.

*Wolfgangus Musculus* has Compos'd a very large Commentary upon the Psalms, which in the year 1550. he dedicated to the Magistrates of the Republick of *Bern*. This Author in his Preface affirms, That he had spent 20 years in the Composing this Work, and that he had consulted those who writ before him upon this Book; but that he had profited very little by reading the Ancient Fathers, who neglected the Literal Sence. This he attributes to the Custom of their Times, *Versati sunt Patres,* says he, *in Scripturis Sacris peculiari quodam suorum temporum ductu.* He shews more Modesty in his Work, and has more respect for Antiquity than most of the other Protestants, and altho he made a new Translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew, he endeavour'd however to keep as close as he could to the Ancient Latin Interpreter; then he adds, That he wishes that the Ancient Latin Translation agreed so well with the Original Hebrew, that it might be preserv'd without alteration; *Optarim eam versionem quæ in usu est Ecclesia Latina, sic esse Hebraica veritati conformem, ut integra retineri queat.* Lastly, He adds in the same Preface, That every one ought to have the liberty of choosing the

the Sence which he thinks is best; and it would be folly, according to St. *Augustin*, for any one resolutely to affirm, that he has taken the right Sence of the Author. *Haud immerito,* says he, *arbitratur Augustinus admodum temerarium esse in Expositione Scripturarum de certitudine mentis ejus qui scripsit pertinaciter contendere.* Aug. 12. Conf.

The Method which he has observ'd in his Commentary is pretty exact. He at first sets down the different Translations of the Ancient Greek and Latin Interpreters, with which he sometimes joyns some Modern ones, then he literally Expounds the words of his Text, and adds some Moral Reflections. We may say, that this Author truly understood how to Explain the Scripture, but he has not had all the necessary helps therein, because he was neither Skill'd in the study of Tongues or Criticism: He examines however without prejudice the Ancient Greek and Latin Translations, and he very well understood that the Points which are at present in the Hebrew Text, were not in St. *Jerom's* or the *Septuagint's* time. But he understood not how the Arabick Translation of the Psalms had been made although he quotes it very often. He wonders why the Arabick Translator agrees with the *Septuagint*, and the reason why he wonders, is because the Arabick has no relation to the Greek; but on the contrary comes nigh the Hebrew. He understood not that most of the Eastern People followed the *Septuagint* Translation, and that the Hebrew was hardly any where understood but in the Jewish Synagogues. Comm. in Ps. 30. 10. Comm. in Ps. 1. 4.

*Johannes Mercerus* who succeeded *Vatables* in the King's Hebrew Professorship at *Paris*, is one of the most Learned and Judicious Interpreters of the Scripture, amongst those of the Reformed Religion, and he had yet been more to be commended, had he not forsaken the Religion of his Fathers to follow *Calvin's* Novelties. He perfectly understood both Greek and Hebrew, and could very well read the Rabbins Books. Thus his way of Expounding the Bible is more exact, and has more of the Critick in it, than the Method which other Authors before him took. He endeavour'd wholly to find out the Literal Sence of his Text, and the proper signification of the Hebrew words. Wherefore he usually gives the different Explanations of the Rabbins, which he sometimes Corrects, he has not neglected the *Septuagint* or other ancient Translators of the Bible, which yet

yet he might oftner have done. He has also consulted the Hebrew Manuscript Copies, of the Bible in the King's Library. In a word, he had all the qualities requisite for a Learned Interpreter of the Scripture, and he would without doubt have better succeeded, had he not followed the Noyalties of his time. His best Commentaries are those on the Book of *Job*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Proverbs*, and *Canticles*. As these Books were Composed in Verse, and in a very curt style, it is very hard to find out the true Sence without perfectly understanding Hebrew, and having a searching head. Now *Mercerus* wanted neither the one or the other, and he throughly examines all the Difficulties that he meets with. As for his Commentaries upon *Genesis*, there is a great deal of Jewish Learning in them; but they are not throughly Corrected. *Beza* who Printed all the Commentaries of this Author could not leave out the trifling part, especially of the latter, which are not so Correct as the former. *Cornelius Bertram*, who was fellow Collegian with *Beza* at *Geneva*, and who understood the Hebrew Tongue, has took the pains of Publishing them pretty exact, although there are some faults though but few.

*Lud. Vives*  
in Anim-  
adv. in  
Vet. Test.

The Critical Remarks which *Ludovicus Vives* publish'd, under the Title of *Animadversiones in Veteris Testamenti libros omnes* belong only to some passages of the Bible which he has pickt out, and pretended to have illustrated anew, and as he would be Critical upon the Explanation of other Men, he sometimes runs upon the least Niceties of Grammar, and shews in his new Interpretation more subtilty than solidity. He sometimes goes to the Tongues that are near the Hebrew, for to find out the proper signification of the Hebrew words. When he undertook the making these Critical Observations on the Bible, he thought to render the new Flemish Translation of the whole Scripture, which was to be made by the Order of the Synod of *Dort*, more Correct. He however sometimes falls off from his main design, in giving in his Observations, several things which purely belong to Scholarship, and has no relation to Criticism. As in the first words of his Observation, where he takes notice that according to the Cabal called *Gematrie* by the first words of *Genesis*, the World is proved to have been Created in the beginning of the year, that is to say, in the Month of *September*; Then he adds, That according to another Cabal called *Temura*, or Transposition of Letters,

Letters, we find that the World was Created the First day of *September*. But this Observation and several of this Nature, which the Author has inserted into his Work, are of no use for the Explaining the Literal Sence, and the making a good Translation of the Bible. He sets down other Jewish Dreams in his Observations, as when with the *Talmudist* Doctors he puts this Question upon these words of the same Chapter of *Genesis*, *And God created Man*; why God created but one Man in the World, to which he answers with the *Talmud*, that God created but one Man to shew us, that if any one destroys only one *Israelite*, it is the same as if he destroyed the whole World; and on the contrary, if he preserves him, he does the same as if he had preserv'd the whole world. These sort of Reflections ought not to have been in a Work so abridg'd as this is, but it almost always happens that Persons who have any sort of Learning, fill their Books therewith, without considering whether that sort of Learning is to the purpose. To conclude, these Notes of *Ludovicus Vives* may be of great use to those who study the Grammatical Sence of the Scripture, wherein he chiefly excels, although he sometimes shows too much subtilty; It is certain there is nothing can be of greater use for the understanding the Scripture than these sort of Critical Observations, which regard only the proper Signification of the words, and the Literal Sence of the Text, but it would have been well if the Authors of these Remarks had put in nothing superfluous, and had not hunted after Niceties. For the better understanding of these Authors, it is fit that we should here give a Catalogue of them, as is found in the Books which the *English* have Printed upon the whole Scripture, intituled, *Critici Sacri*. We shall at the same time make some Critical Observations upon each Author that we may not only understand their Names, but also their failures and perfections.

## CHAP. XV.

*A Criticism upon two famous Collections of the Scripture made by English Protestants.*

THE *English* Protestants after having Published the Hebrew Text of the Bible with a great many Translations thereof into the Oriental Tongues, and joining therewith the Latin Interpretation of each Translation, made a Collection of the best Observations they could find about the Scripture. The first Work is call'd, *The Polyglott Bible*, because it contains the Bible in several Languages. The second is call'd, *Critici Sacri*; forasmuch as the Authors they have there inserted, spend not their time in making long Commentaries, but in Explaining of the Text according to the Ancient Criticks and Grammarians Method. We can no ways methinks better judge of this Collection, than by particularly examining of each Author, and observing both his failures and perfections.

Sebast.  
Munster.

*Sebastian Munster* is the first of all these Criticks; and as we have already spoke of his Translation, we shall Treat here only of his Remarks. No one can deny but that he understood the Hebrew Tongue, and that he knew how to read the Jewish Commentaries; but forasmuch as he consulted only the Rabbins in his Observations, they are too full of Judaism. For Example, there was no necessity for him to enlarge as he has, at the beginning of his Notes, upon what some Cabalistical *Jews* say concerning the Seven things which were Created before the World. These are Dreams invented by the Rabbins who have Allegorically Explain'd the Scripture. Criticks ought only to Explain the Literal Sense of their Authors, and to avoid any thing which is beside the purpose. *Munster* has not carefully enough endeavoured to take from the Rabbins only what might instruct his Reader in the Literal Sense of the Bible: and besides when he gives the Literal Sense he almost always follows the Rabbins; whether it be in the proper Signification of the Hebrew words, or in their Etymologies which no more than these Rabbins are infallible,  
we

we ought not to give Credit to all the Grammatical Observations which *Munster* has taken from their Books, because they are often grounded only upon Conjectures and Probability. He produces them however, as if they were without Question, and as if we were wholly assur'd of the Signification of the Hebrew words. But this is rather a fault in the Hebrew Tongue which is uncertain, than in *Munster*, whose chief design in his Observations was to give the Rabbins Literal Explanations in which he has well enough succeeded.

The second of these Criticks is *Paulus Phagius*, who has not made Observations on the whole Bible, as *Munster* has, but only on the Five Books of *Moses*. And these Observations are made upon the Chaldean Paraphrase of *Onkelos*, which he has Translated into Latin, and not upon the Hebrew Text; they however illustrate the Text as well as the Paraphrase. His Method is according to the Rules of Criticism, because he endeavours only to give the proper Signification of the Hebrew and Chaldee words, and to make us understand the Literal Sense of *Moses*. He enlarges more in his Notes than *Munster* does especially upon the four first Chapters of *Genesis*, which he has Explain'd by themselves at large. He follows the same Authors as *Munster* does, and usually quotes none but the Rabbins, whom he has judiciously enough chosen for the Explaining of the Literal Sense. He has better succeeded than *Munster* in several places where he seems to have a larger knowledge in the Hebrew Tongue. These two Criticks however are alike faulty, because they have observed the same Method, and rely wholly on the Commentaries of the Rabbins, whence they have indeed taken some things very useful relating to the Literal Sense of the Scripture; but they sometimes also give us very ridiculous Etymologies from the Credit of those Rabbins, who are very liable to be deceiv'd.

*Vatables*, or rather the Notes that go under his Name, are in this Collection set down in the third place, these Notes are very Literal, and according to the Rules of Criticism, and the Author endeavours chiefly to Explain the Difficulties of the Text, he usually follows the Interpretation of the Rabbins, and principally *R. D. Kimbi*. We may call his Observations thorough Commentaries upon the whole Text, because there are very few places which he does not Explain clearly, and without Digression.

gression. He very often stands upon things which are not very difficult, that he might be profitable to all his Readers; in a word, this Collection of Notes upon the Scriptures which *Robert Steph.* *Stephen* has Printed under *Vatables* his Name, is very much esteemed, whether it be that they were really *Vatables* his, or that they were Collected out of different Authors, which is more probable; he has however suppressed their Names, and amongst others *Calvin's*, from whom he has borrowed something in his Notes.

*Sebast. Castal.* The Notes of *Sebastian Castalio*, who is the fourth in this Collection, are not so full of Jewish Learning as other Criticks are, as he applied himself to Elegancy and the Reading Prophane Authors, he often mixes something of it in his Observations, which he does very agreeably, and without deviating too much from his Text.

*Isidor. Clar.* *Isidorus Clarinus*, who is the sixth Critick, did hardly any thing else but Copy *Munster's* Observations, where he has any Jewish Learning. So that we may pass over a great part of this Author's Notes, there being no necessity of repeating the same things. This however is very usual in this Collection of Criticism, and in all others where Authors are set down at large, whereas it would be much better to make Extracts of them, for avoiding the unnecessary Repetitions of the same things.

*Drusius.* *Drusius* who is the seventh Critick, ought in my Opinion to be preferred before all others; for besides that he was very Learned in the Hebrew Tongue, and that he knew how to consult the Jewish Books, he had exactly read the Ancient Greek Translators, so that he had form'd to himself a better Idea of the Holy Tongue, than other Criticks, who had read only the Rabbins Books. He moreover had read the Works of *St. Jerom*, and some other Fathers, in a word, *Drusius* is the most Learned and Judicious Critick in this Collection.

*Grotius.* *Grotius* his Notes are likewise herein inserted, and as they are esteemed by the whole World we need not give a particular Commendation of them. I shall only observe, that he sometimes enlarges too much upon the Quotations of Poets, and a great many other Prophane Authors, where he seems to shew himself rather a Learned Man, than a Judicious Critick: If he had avoided this fault, his Notes would have been much more short, and no less good. We ought chiefly to esteem them, because

because he often compares the Ancient Greek Translators of the Bible with the Hebrew Text, and is not prepossess'd in favour of the *Mazorett*. He multiplies however sometimes the various Readings where there's no need, and although he usually chooseth the best Explanation of the Text, we ought however to observe, that being prejudic'd in favour of the *Arminians* and *Soci-nians*, he sometimes favours these two Sects. To conclude, although I have blamed *Grotius* because he often in his Notes, quotes Prophane Authors, he however has sometimes very excellent things in these Citations, whereby we may clear several Difficulties in the Scripture. I could only have wish't that according to the Rules of Criticism, he had given the Testimony of these Prophane Authors, especially of the Fathers only in places that wanted Illustration. For Example, there was no necessity for the Explaining the word *Signa* in the first Chapter of *Genesis* Vers. 14. to bring two Verses of *Homer*, and five of the Poet *Aratus*; I know not what reason he had to say upon the following word *Tempora*, that *Proclus* calls the Stars in his Divinity *Organes*, or Instruments of time. In a word, he had methinks done better to have Explain'd the Literal Sence of the Text in few words, and to have quoted Authorities only upon Difficulties that wanted Illustration.

Besides these Authors which are the Principle Criticks in this Collection, there is also the Learned Book of *Massius* upon the Book of *Joshuah*. This Learned Man Printed the Hebrew Text of *Joshuah* with the *Septuagint* Translation, as *Origin* had done in his Hexaplasses, and by this we may see the Method of *Origin* in mixing the *Theodotian* with the *Septuagint* Translation. *Massius* has hereto joyned some Illustrations, or little Critical Notes, whereby we may understand the Ancient marks heretofore called *Asterisks*, and little Lines and other Marks which so curiously distinguish't in this great Work of *Origin*, what was truly the *Septuagint* from what had been added in the Hebrew, and from what seem'd to be defective because it was not in the Hebrew. Besides these little Critical Notes the same *Massius* has made a Literal Commentary upon the History of *Joshuah*, where he enlarges a little too much in giving the Rabbins Explanations of places where he need'd not to have done it. But this fault can only please those who love Jewish Learning. To conclude, we have hardly any Author more vers'd in the Scripture stile, and who better.

better understood the Criticism of the Bible, than he, as we may easily judge by reading the Learned Prefaces before his Work.

*Codurcus.* The Commentary of *Codurcus* upon *Job* is also placed among these Criticks. In effect he is very Literal, and is principally taken up in the Interpretation of hard words, which he Explains according to the Rules of Grammar, he often quotes the Chaldean Paraphrafer on this Book; which is an impertinent Author, and full of pleasant Stories, which can please only some superstitious *Jews*. *Codurcus* falls often upon little trifles, which is usual with Grammarians, and he spends many words to no purpose in giving the Measure of the Verses which he with *St. Jerom* affirms this Book is Composed in, supposing them to be Hexameters, but we are wholly ignorant of the measure of those Ancient Verses. They have nothing common with the Greek or Latin Poetry, or with the new Poetry which the *Jews* have borrowed from the *Arabians*.

*Rodolph. Bain.* There is also in this Collection the Commentary of *Rodolphus Bain*, upon the Proverbs of *Solomon*, this Author who was an Englishman, and the King's Hebrew Professor at *Paris*, enlarges upon the Literal Sence. He sometimes follows the Jewish Interpreters, and his chief Author is *Aben Esra*, whom he often quotes, although there is not much Jewish Learning in his Work. To conclude, he Explains his Text very clearly, and always joyns with the Vulgar another Translation made from the Hebrew.

*Forerius.* It would have been well had there been in this Collection intire Commentaries upon all the Prophecies, which seem not to be sufficiently illustrated barely by Critical Remarks. There is only added to these Criticks, the Commentary of *Forerius* upon *Isaiah*, and *Liveleius's* upon the five first little Prophets. *Forerius* was a *Portuguese*, and we may see in his Work that he understood the Scripture style, he sometimes runs upon the Moral Sence; but as he hardly deviates from his Subject, that onely serves the better to illustrate the Literal one: *Liveleius* his Commentary upon the five first little Prophets is also very Literal, and we ought rather to call it Observations than a Commentary. He has endeavoured to appear Learned when there was no need for it; which is fitter for a Rhetorician than a Critick, who ought to Explain in short the Scripture Text, without adorning his Discourse with unnecessary Authorities.

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He ought also methinks to have set down that Translation of the Text which he thought was best, and not to spend time in giving other Interpreters Translations, with design wholly to lay them aside. It is however very necessary to examin the Ancient Translations, and compare them with the Modern ones, but it is very unnecessary in bare Observations upon the Scripture to make a Criticism upon the Translation of *Pagnin*, *Castalio*, *Tremellius*, and some other Modern Interpreters. It is sufficient for us onely to have consulted these Modern Translators without quoting them, and barely saying we do not approve of them. To conclude, we may in general say of this great Collection of the Scripture, that there are many things that might have been left out, as also many things might have been inserted. There are in the two last Volumes several excellent Works which may be of use for the illustrating some difficulties of the Scripture, but they are not all equally good, and there are some the Extracts of which had been sufficient.

As there were several Repetitions in this Collection of Criticks in *England*, and that there were many places that were not Explain'd, an English Author took the pains to Abridge the Nine Volumes of the Criticks, and to leave out what seem'd to be superfluous, and to supply at the same time the defects by other Books. This Method is certainly the best, because nothing is set down but what is necessary, and one has the liberty of leaving out what one thinks fit. But it is hard to find Persons capable for the accomplishing so great a design, and who have judgment enough to choose onely what is best in all Authors.

*Matthew Pool*, who Printed this last Collection call'd *Synopsis Criticorum*, has made indeed a good Collection of the Authors which he has Added, besides those which were in the Criticks which he Abridg'd, but he consider'd not that he undertook a Work above him. He seems to have done well in not following Father *De la Haye's* Method of Collecting the different Translations of the Bible in his great Work, but he perceiv'd not that he committed greater faults himself by giving these same different Translations of the Bible, as they are in the Latin Translations, without considering that most of the varieties which he sets down under the specious title of the Hebrew Text, *Samaritan*, *Chaldean*, *Syriack*, and *Arabick*, were invented onely by him who understood not any of these Tongues.

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That we may then the better judge of *Matthew Pool's* understanding, who made the Collection we are now speaking of, we may observe that he thought for the farther clearing of the Scripture Text, it was necessary to set down the chief Translations of the Bible. Finding Father *De la Haye* had very confusedly inserted them in his Collection, he has wholly chang'd his Method, and (to use his own Expression) he has begun all things anew, and consulted all things in their Originals themselves. There is no one but would think that one who promises so great an exactness, had read both the *Jewish* and *Samaritan* Hebrew Text, the *Samaritan*, *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, and the other Translations in their own proper Tongues, for the publishing of an Exact and Perfect Work. He however understands by the Originals, which he had consulted, nothing else but the Latin Translations both of these Texts and Translations, which makes his Work to be full of Errors, which are impossible to be Corrected, but by beginning all things again.

He understood not that what he often calls a various Interpretation was grounded onely upon the Latin Translation, and not upon the Original Text, or Translations from that Text. He says for Example in several places, That it was otherwise in the Samaritan than in the Hebrew, and yet it is certain that the Hebrew and Samaritan are in those places the same. But what made him mistake is, that as most of the Hebrew words are Equivocal, and have several significations, the Latin Translators have made use of different words in their Translations. *Matthew Pool* who consider'd not this, has made more Variations than he need. The same may be said of the Samaritan, Chaldee, Syriack, and Arabick Translations, which differ not so often from the Hebrew Text, as this Author pretends they do. It is sufficient for me to have took notice in general of this fault, which he very often commits, without producing any Examples.

As for his manner of Collecting the various Expositions of the Text, it is a little intricate, and the Reader must study a great while to make a clear sense of most of the Difficulties he there meets with. So many different Interpretations of each word, which are for the most part Abridg'd, breed a great deal of Confusion, and one has a great deal to do to joyn the words together when they are so distant one from another, and explain'd so many several ways. Besides, the Author usually onely giving the  
various

Various Expositions without judging which are the best, does not sufficiently instruct the Reader, who has much ado to determine, especially when he finds no Reasons why he should be of one Opinion rather than another. To which we may add, that there are in this Abridgement some frivolous Repetitions. There need not have been so many Authors set down, and their Sense might have been express'd more neatly, and in fewer words. In a word, the Method of this Abridgement is intricate, and it requires a great deal of time to unravel all the different Sences, which have hardly any Relation one to the other. If any one considers but never so little how this first word of *Genesis*, *In Principio* is Explain'd in this Abridgement, I am perswaded he will agree to what I have already said.

What is most commendable in this Abridgement of the Criticks, is the Author's great pains, who has carefully gather'd together what was scatter'd up and down in several places, and plac'd it in its proper place, abridging of it for the Reader's conveniency. We find for Example many places of the Scripture Explain'd by *Bochartus* in his Book intituled *Phaleg*, and in another of his Books upon the Animals mention'd in the Bible, without taking the pains to turn over such great Volumes. The difficulties in Chronology Explain'd by the best Authors, are there abridg'd; so that most of the hard places of the Scripture upon which whole Volumes have been Compos'd, are well enough Explain'd in this Work, because the Author has took the pains to read what he could find best upon these sort of difficulties, and to insert Extracts thereof in his Collection. It would for Example have been to no purpose to have Reprinted the Treatises in the two last Volumes of the English Criticks, because most of these Treatises are full of Observations, which are of no use in the Expounding of the Scripture; and therefore it was much more proper to Extract out of those Books what was most convenient for the illustrating of the Bible.

## C H A P. XVI.

*Of the Socinians. Their way of Explaining the Scripture. Several Reflections upon their Method.*

**T**HERE is no Religion which is not at least in appearance, grounded upon the pure Word of God. Upon this Foundation all the new Heresies are grounded, and it is strange that all the Patriarchs of these new Sects agree in their Principle, and yet draw such different Conclusions from the same Principle. *Socinians.* The *Socinians* agree with the Protestants, whether *Lutherans*, *Zuinolians*, or *Calvinists*, that the Holy Scripture is the only true Principle of Religion, and that we ought to search for it only in the Old and New Testament, and that there is no need of having recourse either to Tradition or the Fathers. But when any Fundamental Point in Religion comes to be decided by this Principle, the latter are as much wide from the former, as Heaven from Earth. Which is a certain sign that the Principle they make use of, is not sufficient for the deciding of the differences which daily arise about Matters of Religion, and therefore that we ought with the Catholicks to have recourse to something else.

*Calvin.* A little before *Calvin* had establish'd his Reformation at *Geneva* (which was in the year 1535.) *Michael Servetus* a Spaniard, had reviv'd the Heresie of the Ancient *Anti-Trinitarians*, which *Calvin* so vigorously oppos'd both by Writing, and *Viva voce* that *Servetus* was at last Condemn'd to be Burnt by the Magistrates of *Geneva*. This however stop'd not the course of *Servetus's* Heresie; for *Lelius Socinus* an *Italian* carried it yet on. As he very well understood both Greek and Hebrew, and was of an upright Conversation, he easily contracted Friendship with the most Learned Protestants of his time, and especially with *Philip Melancton*, *Calvin*, *Brentius*, *Bullinger*, *Zanchius*, and *Peter Martyr*. And by this means he understood both by Travelling and by way of Letter, the Capacity of these new Reformers. Wherefore he took the liberty of establishing a new System of Religion, without deserting

serting of their Principle. He was of Opinion, that when they undertook to Reform, they were possess'd with most of the prejudices of the Catholick Religion. He went then to the very rise of all, to the end he might come nigher the *Jews*, from whom the Christians borrow'd their Religion, and not particularly to relate the Articles of his Reformation, he at once exploded the Mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, Original Sin, and Grace. In a word, he reviv'd *Phorinianism*, *Pelagianism*, and several other ancient Heresies. In a word, he thought that Men were the Authors both of the Faith, and all these Mysteries as they were Explain'd either by Catholicks or Protestants.

This Arch Heretick died at *Zurich* in the year 1562, being only 37 years old. *Faustus Socinus* his Nephew, who inherited both his Uncles Books and Doctrine, Printed in the year 1570. a little Treatise concerning the Authority of the Scripture in *Italian*, which was after in the year 1588. Translated and Printed under the Name of the Reverend Father *Dominick Lopez* of the Society of Jesus. He in this Treatise defends the Authority of the Old and New Testament, or rather he only proves the Authority of the New, whence he concludes, that we ought to receive the Books of the Old Testament as Divine, because our Saviour has authoriz'd them in the New Testament. The *Socinians* commonly believe that the Books of the Scripture have not been corrupted, although many faults have crept in by reason of the length of time, and the negligence of Transcribers. Wherefore in all their Disputes they have recourse to the Rules of Criticism, and they consult the various Readings, making use of those which they think are best, or rather which agree best with their prejudices. *Faustus Socin de Ant.*

As Christianity is chiefly contain'd in the Books of the New Testament, they studied those Books much more than those of the Old Testament. One of their ordinary proofs for the authorizing of the Law of *Moses*, and the other Books of the Old Testament is, that our Saviour receiv'd them, and by receiving of them, made them Authentick. I have found no Author amongst them who has writ upon all the Old Testament, except *Brennius*, who has made short Observations, and Explains only those places which he thinks want Illustration. *Brennius.*

There is plac'd before this work a little Discourse for the more easie understanding of the Scripture, the Rules whereof may be equally useful both to Catholicks and Protestants. And as the *Socinians* rely wholly upon their Reason, and not at all upon the Authority of the Ancients, they have added this Rule; *Nullam interpretationem S. Scripturae admittendam esse, quae vel cum sana ratione, vel sibi ipsi, vel evidenti sensuum externorum experientia repugnet.* In a word in the Explaining of the Scripture, they make use both of their Sense, and Reason. Wherein they disagree with *Descartes's* Principles in his *Metaphysical Meditations*, which they wholly reject, affirming that the Exterior Senses are in their way infallible.

*Cupperus*, *adv. Tract. Theologico Politic.* *Cupperus Brennius's* Nephew who was of the same Opinion with his Uncle, lays down this Principle, That there is nothing in the Scripture contrary to Reason, Experience, Mathematical Demonstrations, and Natural Light. He moreover affirms, That the Scripture is obscure, but in very few places but his Book shows that he Studied more Philosophy than Divinity. He besides adds, That the Knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue is not at present necessary, because the New Testament which is the Rule of our Religion is writ in Greek; but he considers not that the New Testament is writ in Synagogue Greek, which cannot be thoroughly understood without understanding either Hebrew or Syriack.

This same *Socinian* Author quotes *Vossius* to prove the little necessity there is for the Hebrew, because says he, the Books of the Old Testament have been Translated into Greek: But as we have already observ'd, it is almost impossible to understand this Synagogue Greek, or the other Jewish Translations, without the help of the Hebrew Tongue. This *Socinian* has gone the nearest way to work to show that the Scripture (upon which only he grounds his Religion) is clear; and consequently is a good Principle. In which he is mistaken as well as all the Protestants, and if we but never so little consider the Criticism upon the Hebrew Text and the Translations, we shall easily be persuaded to the contrary.

*Cupper. Ib. l. 2. p. 272.* To conclude, *Cupperus* affirms, That every one is Judge in Matters of Faith, because according to *St. Paul*, every one must give an account of his actions to God; and as he denies all Authority in Divinity as well as in Philosophy, he affirms, That we ought to have no other Rule of our Faith but the places of the Scripture, which

• which we clearly understand; for which he alledges the Experience of our Exterior Sences, for the proving the truth of his Method, which according to him are never deceiv'd; He quotes some places of the Scripture, both in the New and Old Testament, which seem to Contradict one another, and yet he Explains one by the other; altho there is a manifest Contradiction. But altho the *Socinians* pretend to be the most refin'd Christians, it is easie to show that their way of Explaining the Scripture is faulty as well as that of the Protestants, and that they as well as the other Divines go according to their Prejudices. All their Divinity consists in Rules of Grammar and Logick, which they apply to the Hebrew Text. If they tell the Catholicks as also the Protestants do, that their Faith is of Men, because it is grounded as much upon the word of Men as upon the Word of God, they may easily be answer'd that their Faith is no more Divine since it is grounded only upon Consequences drawn from the Scripture, which consequently are not infallible. I dare affirm there are few People more blinded with their own Opinions, than they who boast of searching out the truth, and being free from all prejudice; for under this pretence of clearly understanding of things, it is impossible to make them understand when they are mistaken.

It is then plain, that the *Socinians* as well as the other Divines are prejudic'd in their Explanations upon the Scripture. This *Brenn.* makes *Brennius*, who made but very short Notes upon the Old *Not. in. Script.* Testament, seem to have Compos'd them only with a design of favouring the prejudices of those of his Sect. He has lay'd down for a Principle that we ought not to rely upon the Authority of others in finding out of the Sence of the difficult places of the Scripture: and yet where he endeavours to defend his Opinions, he maintains them more by Authority than Reason; Thus upon these first words of *Genesis*, *In the beginning God created*, where the Hebrew has *Elohim*, God's in the Plural, he makes use of the Authorities of *Calvin*, *Bucer*, *Pagnin*, *Mercerus*, *Beumlerus*, of those of *Zurich*, *Buxtorf*, and *Drusius*, to prove that this Plural is the same with the Singular, so that by this way of speaking, is not denoted the Mystery of the Trinity. He does the same in several other places, where he chooses the Interpretations which favour his prejudices; so that this Author in Explaining of the Scripture, has not consulted without any Passion the Natural light which the *Socinians* affirm ought to be done; but having lay'd down a System of his Religion, he applys all things thereto. To

To proceed, the *Socinians* follow *Luther's* Method in Expounding of the Scriptures, in that they affirm that the Old Testament ought to be Expounded with relation to the New, and therefore the Rabbin Books who understood not this, are of no use; and yet there is no Sect comes nigher Judaism than the *Socinians*. *Cupperus* moreover affirms in his answer to *Spinosa*, that there is no absolute Necessity for our understanding of the Old Testament, and consequently we need not spend time in clearing of the Equivocal words, which we say the Hebrew is full of. The *Socinians* studied but little the Old Testament, being perswaded that Christianity was only to be found in the New. Wherefore we shall Treat more particularly in the Second Part of this Work, of the *Socinians* way of Expounding the Scripture. I shall however say something here of their way of Interpreting the Old Testament; that we may the better understand the Subtilties of these new Hereticks.

As the *Socinians* utterly destroy the Protestants Innovations by making use of the same Principle, these latter have been oblig'd strenuously to oppose them both in their Schools and Writings, which they have Publish'd against this new Doctrine. There have however been very few Protestant Divines who have sufficiently answer'd the *Socinians*, who affirm that there can be no medium held betwixt their Religion, and the *Roman Catholick*; for if we take the Scripture, Reason, and Experience for our Rule, we must, say they, be of their Opinion, whereas if we follow the prejudices of Tradition, we must of necessity joyn with the *Roman Catholicks*, in a word the Protestants in their Disputes against the *Socinians*, have much ado to forbear the making use of the Authority of the Ancient Fathers of the Church; wherefore the *Socinians* have reason to blame them for not standing to their Principle. *Joshua De la Place*, Minister of the Reform'd Religion at *Saumur*, has answer'd the *Socinians* the best without running from the Opinion which is common to both those Religions. Wherefore I shall set down here some Passages of the Old Testament, as they have been Explain'd by these two Authors, to the end we may the better judge of *Socinus* and his followers Method in Explaining of the Old Testament.

*Calvin* had heretofore prov'd the Divinity of the Son out of several places of the Old Testament, which were apply'd to our Saviour in the New, which seem'd plainly to prove that he was really

*Cupper.*  
in *Tract.*  
*Theolog.*  
*Polit.*

*Joshua*  
*Place.*

*Calvin.*

really God, since the same places which plainly denote the Divinity in the Old Testament, are in the same nature apply'd to him in the New. *Socinus* however, and they of his Sect, found ways how to Explain all these passages according to their prejudices. *Joshua De la Place* endeavour'd in a Book to that purpose to defend the Opinions of his Patriarch, as also the Divinity of the Word, acknowledging with the *Socinians* no other Rule for their Disputes but the Scripture only divided from all Tradition. *Joshua Place Disput. de Test. & Argum. à Vet. Test. Petit. Ar-gum. 1.*

The first Proof is taken out of Chap. 6. *Isaiab*, where the Glory of God is spoken of, which the Prophet affirms he had seen. Now St. *John* calls this same Glory of God, the Glory of our Saviour; and therefore according to the *Socinians* who explain the difficult places of the Old Testament by what is more clearly Explain'd in the New, the Glory of our Saviour seems here to be spoke of, who is really God. But *Socinus* has immediately recourse to the Rules of Criticism. He affirms that we may read four Verses together in St. *John*, as if they were within two Parenthesis, and therefore there is no necessity for our applying of the Pronouns to our Saviour, but to God only, whom the Prophet *Isaiab* speaks of. *Socinus* farther adds, That there is nothing more confus'd in the Scripture than these Pronouns Relatives, which for the most part we cannot tell to whom they relate; and he gives some Examples thereof. He afterwards speaks of some Greek Copies of the New Testament which favour his Opinion, where we read τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *The Glory of God*, and not τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, *His Glory*. *Isai. 6. 1. John 12. 13.*

As *De la Place* acknowledg'd the same Principle as *Socinus*, he was oblig'd to answer him according to his own Method. He says then in the first place, that there is no sign of a Parenthesis either in the Text or in the Translations, and that the words of the Text require none; as for the Pronoun Relative, we ought to follow the most Copies; and he gives several other Reasons: But this Method after all being only humane, and on the other side, the Principle on which they ground their Faith, not being so clear as in these occasions is requir'd, I am of opinion that we ought neither to rely upon *Joshua De la Place's* nor *Socinus's* Decision; but we ought to have recourse to another Principle, which has always been in the Church as an Abridgment of Religion apart from the Scripture, by which Abridgment we regulate the Difficulties of the Bible; and this we call Tradition, which Tradition.

dition was in the Church before there was any Scripture, and would still be preserv'd if there were no Book of Scripture. In effect the more understanding we grow in Criticism, the more we should correct Religion in following of *Socinus's* and *De la Place's* Principle.

It is certain that the Authors of the New Testament writ at first without either Points or Comma's, or any other Distinction; and therefore *Socinus* might put them as he thought fit to make the best Sence. It is moreover certain, that there is nothing more intricate in the Scripture than the Pronouns; and therefore *Socinus* seems to have done well in observing that the sence of the Scripture is very often dubious upon this account. What *La Place* urges against him is only probable, being grounded upon Consequences which are indeed drawn from the Scripture, which in it self is an infallible Principle; but we do not certainly find that the Consequences agree with the Principle from whence they are drawn. The *Socinians* and Protestants however have no other way of Expounding the Scripture but this, and they urge against the Catholicks that their Religion being grounded partly upon Tradition, cannot be Divine.

If we would take the pains to run over the other passages of the Scripture quoted by *la Place* to prove the Divinity of the Son of God, with the *Socinians* Answers, we should find them to be only nice Criticks, especially the *Socinians* who affirm, that the Protestants retain most of the prejudices of the Catholicks, and that theirs was not a thorough Reformation. It is hard to resolve all the *Socinians* Objections; and to answer them according to their Principles, without understanding very well both Greek and Hebrew, and being well vers'd in the Scripture Style. They take the liberty of reforming the Text of the Bible according to the Rules of Criticism; and thus they often make new Tranlations of the same Text. Wherefore most of the Disputes betwixt *Josua De la Place* and the *Socinians* consist only in Grammatical and Logical Observations.

I confess one ought to be very Learned in this sort of Criticism for to understand the Holy Scriptures; but there can methinks be no certainty in a Religion which is grounded upon these sort of Subtilties. The Protestants and *Socinians* however have no other Principle of their Religion than this; and what is altogether  
strange

strange is, that they both of them own the Scriptures to be plain and easie to be understood. Wherein they show that they speak only according to the Prejudices of their Religion, and not according to Truth, since they cannot agree upon the Exposition of the chief places upon which they ground their belief. But we have spoke enough of the *Socinians* Method in Explaining of the Scripture. We shall Treat more at large hereof in the Second Part of this work, where we shall give a Critical History of the New Testament.

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## CHAP. XVII.

*Criticism upon some Books which are of use for the understanding of the Bible, and first upon those made by Catholick Authors.*

BESIDES the Commentaries and Observations upon the Scripture, there have been other Treatises writ upon the same Subject by Persons both Learned, and well vers'd in this sort of Study: and since their Works may be of use for the understanding of the Bible, I shall here set down some of the chief of them, and give my Judgment thereupon, that every one may make choice of those which he thinks are the most useful; and at the same time know what each Author is excellent in, and thereby make a more proper Choice.

We may read most of the Prefaces to the great Bibles, and especially *Arias Montanus's*, before the great Bible of *Antwerp*. In the Treatise which he has inserted into this Preface under *Josephus's* Name, *sive de Arcani sermonis interpretatione*; he has Explain'd many of the Scripture words, altho not very exactly. He has affected a Method which agrees not with his Subject, and he sets down many common things, which every one knows. There are other much better Dictionaries of the Scripture, and altho they were writ by Protestants, we ought not to neglect them;



them; the little Treatise concerning the Massoret in the same Preface is also very uncorrect, and the Author only shows that he understood not this Subject. The Book which *Becharius* Printed call'd *Phaleg*, ought to be prefer'd before the Discourses of *Arias Montanus* call'd *Phaleg* and *Canaam*, which are also in his Preface; we may also elsewhere find better Treatises than his, concerning the weights and measures of the Bible. Lastly, Many Authors have Treated better than he of *Noah's Ark*, the Priests Garments, and the Chronology of the Scripture.

*Samuel Bochar.*

*Father De la Haye.*

*Father De la Haye* has put at the beginning of his Collection, call'd *Biblia Maxima*, many Preliminary Questions, which might be of use for the understanding of the Criticism of the Scripture, had the Author better understood this Subject; but as he usually very injudiciously Collects what he had observ'd out of others, and understood not always the sense of his Authors, we ought to take care how we read his Work.

*Serarius Bonfrerus.*

The Jesuits *Serarius* and *Bonfrerius's* *Prolegomenas* upon the Bible are worth the Reading, altho they are not so perfect as could be desir'd. They however understood the Subject they Treated of, and show a great deal of Judgment throughout their Works, only they might have left out some superfluous Questions.

*Bellarmin* and several other Authors, who in their Books of Controversies, have writ upon this Subject, would have succeeded better had they had no one to oppose: This Author however in his Treatise *De verbo Dei*, usually follows the most Moderate Opinions, because he keeps close to the Matter he Treats of; whereas several other Divines who have writ Books of Controversies; thought they did better in being of as contrary Opinion to their Adversaries as they could, without seriously examining the truth of the Matter in Question. *Bellarmin* therefore has done the Jews Justice in not accusing them of designedly corrupting of the Holy Scriptures; but on the other side acknowledging that there are many faults crept in either through the Negligence of Transcribers, or through the late Invention of Vowel Points which have been added to the Hebrew Text. He is also of a contrary Opinion to those who believe that the Greek *Septuagint* Translation which we have at present, has nothing in it of the Ancient *Septuagint*. As for the

*Lib. 2. c. 2.*

*Ibid. c. 6.*

the Vulgar which was declar'd Authentick by the Council of *Trent*, he very judiciously answers *Calvin* and the other Hereticks, who for this reason Condemn'd the Fathers of that Council, that that Council medled not with the Originals which are still of the same Authority as they were before; but that the Church who could not endure any Innovation, had only order'd that the ancient Latin Translation of the Bible should be prefer'd before the Modern ones. Besides, he very well confutes the Objections of *Calvin*, *Kennitius*, and some other Protestants, and lays open their Ignorance and their unjust heats against the Fathers of the Council of *Trent*.

Several Protestants having writ upon this Subject against *Bellarmin*, who however were moderate enough, *Gretser* the Jesuit undertook his Defence, and Treated more largely than he had done upon all the Disputes which concern the Scripture. This Author's Books are indeed very Learned, but he has not link'd his Principles closely enough together, which ought to be observ'd above all things in Disputes; especially in those concerning Religion. What according to my opinion is the most worth reading in his whole Book, is his Criticism upon *Luther's* and other *German* Translations of the Bible, wherein he has succeeded better than in his other Treatises. He shows however no great Judgment in laying aside all the Protestants New Translations, following herein the Example of *St. Augustin* and *Ruffinus*, who strenuously oppos'd *St. Jerom's* new Translation. He alleges the Reasons of these two Fathers, which in the opposing of the Modern Translations of the Bible he applies to them. But the Church having approv'd of *St. Jerom's* new Translation, it was not methinks judiciously done to make use of *St. Augustin's* and *Ruffinus's* Arguments against the Authors of the Modern Translations. He however sets them down at large, and as the Protestants answer'd him, that *St. Augustin* was of that Opinion because he understood not Hebrew, he answers, That the Question was not whether *St. Augustin* understood Hebrew or no; but whether *St. Augustin* and most of the Christians of that time did not vigorously oppose *St. Jerom's* new Translation. I confess I understand not this way of Reasoning; and there was methinks no necessity for the Condemning of the Modern Translators of the Bible, to Arraign *St. Jerom*, and bring the others within the same Condemnation. It signifies nothing

*Tract. de Nov. Translation. Ibid. c. 3.*

to say that the Event has shown that St. *Jerom* undertook his Translation thro Divine Inspiration, whereas there is nothing but what is Humane in the Protestants new Translations. There are few Persons of any Judgment, who think St. *Jerom* was really a Prophet, and directed by the Spirit of God in the making of his new Translation of the Bible, since he did not think himself to be a Prophet. We may find several such Reasons as these in *Grutser's* Book, who is more Learned than Judicious. Which is usual with those who write Controversie, because they endeavour rather to answer their Adversary, than to search out the real Truth.

*Sixt. Sen.  
Holy Lib.*

The Book of *Sixtus* of *Sienna*, call'd *The Holy Library*, is of greater use for the perfecting of us in the Study of the Holy Scriptures. His design was chiefly to make known the Authors of these Books, the ancient Translations and Commentaries; and altho he understood not throughly the Criticism of the Scripture, we may say there are few works upon this Subject which have so much Sence and Learning as this has; and he declares his Opinion very freely. He Treats first of all about the Authority of the Canonical Books, which he ranks into two Classes, calling them Canonical of the first Classis which were always acknowledg'd by the Church to be Divine, and calling the others Canonical of the second Classis, because their Authority was heretofore doubted of, and they were only call'd Ecclesiastical Books. He afterwards speaks very Learnedly of the Authors of each particular Book of the Bible; but as he usually follows the Opinion of the Fathers, and other Authors who had writ before him upon this Subject, he is not always herein exact. For Example; He places the Book of *Esther* amongst the Canonical Books of the second rank, because some Greek Fathers have observ'd that there have been some Additions made to this Book, which were of no Authority; but he ought methinks rather to have consulted the Jewish Canon and St. *Jerom*, than the Greek Fathers who could speak only according to the Greek Copies, which differ much from the Original Hebrew; and according to this Rule we ought to put the Book of *Esther* amongst the Canonical Books of the first rank, altho we neither know when, nor by whom it was writ.

*Sixt. Sen.  
Lib. 8.  
Holy Lib.*

In the second part of his Work he reckons too many Books of Holy Scripture, by reason of some Names in the Bible, and his

his Criticism is not exact in many places; as where he speaks of the Books ascrib'd to *Denys* the *Arcopagite*, and of 204 Books which he makes *Esdra*s the Author of. He has no ground for what he says in the same place of the Books of the Cabbal; the *Jews* had herein impos'd upon *Picus* Count of *Mirandula*; and *Picus*, who too easily believ'd these Impostors occasion'd many others to give Credit to the Books which they set but under *Esdra*s's Name, in which they pretendd were the most secret Mysteries of Religion. *Sixtus* of *Sienna* is more exact in the Fourth Part of his Work, where he makes the Analysis of the Fathers and several other Authors who have writ upon the Bible. We might make a great many Reflections upon this Work; but that would draw us too far; wherefore I shall only make some Observations upon the last part thereof, where he Treats of the Translations of the Scripture.

He lays aside all the new Translations of the Bible, because they only breed Confusion in Religion, and there is no other way of reconciling of different Opinions, but by submitting to the Judgment of the Church, who alone can distinguish the true Interpretations of the Scripture from the false. He is of Opinion that we ought not wholly to rely upon the Original Hebrew, there are so many Difficulties in this Tongue which the most Learned Interpreters are not able to clear. Whence he concludes, that in these difficulties we ought to rely upon the Tradition of the Church; but he stretches methinks his Principle too far, and under pretence of our relying wholly upon the Authorities of the Church in Matters of Religion, he gives it also the Power of deciding things which belong purely to Criticism and Grammar.

As for the Translations of the Scripture, he first sets down the usual Objections against the ancient Translations of the Church; then he endeavours to answer them partly by the Testimony of the Fathers, and partly by some Reasons of his own for the justifying of these ancient Interpreters. He however acknowledges there is no Translation in the Church which we can call exact; but that there is an exactness in them, take them all together, and thus he reconciles several difficulties, which are usually objected against the ancient Translations of the Old Testament. He moreover acknowledges that the ancient Vulgar Latin Translation before St. *Jerom*'s, was not free from faults since.

since St. Jerom Corrected a great many; and that there are also faults in the present Vulgar, which have been observ'd by *Cajetan* and *Oleaster*, but *Sixtus* of *Sienna* understood not thoroughly enough the Criticisin upon the Translations, for the forming of a right Judgment thereupon.

He last of all concludes, That it is a piece of rashness which none but Hereticks can be guilty of, to undertake the making of any new Translations at present, under pretence that there are some little faults in the Vulgar. *Temerarium igitur est, imo plane haeticum propter leves quosdam defectus qui in nostra vulgata editione citra ullum fidei ac morum detrimentum reperiuntur eam spernere & abjicere, novasq; & profanas in locum ejus Translationes introducere; praesertim post oecumenici Tridentini decretum.* But he need not have push'd things so far. The Author acknowledges that *Cajetan*, *Forerius*, and *Oleaster*, have very well Corrected some places of St. *Jerom's* new Translation, which is our present Vulgar, and therefore we ought not according to his own Principle to condemn in general all the new Translations of the Bible; even since the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, which took not thereby away this liberty from Interpreters. If there be any thing ill in the Protestant Translations we ought to condemn that, but we ought not for all that to lay them wholly aside. The ancient Fathers heretofore consulted the Greek Translations of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion*, who were half Jews or Apostats; and therefore we at present have also the liberty of consulting the new Translations of the Bible made by the Protestants, when we think it necessary.

*Leon Castro.* The Apology of *Leon Castro* a Spanish Doctor in defence of the ancient Translations of the Church against the Modern ones, may also be of great use to Divines, and it would have been of greater, had not the Author of it inveigh'd so highly against the Rabbins. He has Explain'd his design in short in the Title of the Book, which is *Apologeticus pro Lectione Apostolica, & Evangelica pro Vulgata, S. Hieronymi; pro Translatione Septuaginta virorum, proq; omni Ecclesiastica Lectione contra earum Objectatores.* This design was great and worthy a Spanish Divine; but he has hardly any other witnesses but the Fathers, who cannot be infallible in Matters of Criticisin. Wherefore most of this Doctor's Arguments signifie nothing at all. We find indeed in his Works a great many Testimonies of the Fathers, but besides that they

Edit.  
Salman.  
1585.

they are not set down according to their true and proper Sence, it was unnecessary to quote them for the illustrating of things they understood nothing of.

He affirms, That the *Jews* have designedly corrupted the Hebrew Copies of the Bible, that the same *Jews* have also taken out many things out of the Greek Copies of the *Septuagint*, and that St. *Jerom* being grown old, perceiv'd that the *Jews* had wrought many changes in the Holy Text; then he adds, That St. *Jerom* had been particularly directed by the Holy Ghost, for the avoiding of those places which had been corrupted by the *Jews*, and the reading the Hebrew words, with the true Points or Vowels.

He moreover affirms, That St. *Jerom* exactly compar'd the Translation of *Aquila* with the Hebrew Text of his time, the better to distinguish the true readings from the false. He has so discerning a Judgment, that he can tell us what Books St. *Jerom* would have Compos'd had he liv'd longer, and amongst the rest he mentions the Apology which this Holy Doctor had thought on for the Defence of the Translations authorized by the Church, by shewing that the *Jews* had corrupted their Copies.

This Spanish Divine is not satisfy'd with ascribing to St. *Jerom* some Books he never thought of, he affirms, That this Father's Works have been corrupted in many places where he finds fault with the *Septuagint* Translation; and that there have been several things added; And lastly, he condemns *Masius*, for quoting in his Commentary upon *Joshua* almost none but the Rabbins Books. This is *Leon Castro's* way of justifying the ancient Interpreters by inventing of new Systems, which he can defend only by Paradoxes; whereas if he had understood the Holy Tongue, and had been well vers'd in the study of the Scripture, he might otherwise have maintain'd them, without inveighing so hotly against those who read the Rabbins, he would have done well to have quoted the Fathers more faithfully, and to have spoke more modestly & with greater restriction of *Masius*.

*Peter Lopez*, who was a Spanish Doctor, shows more Judgment than *Leon Castro*, in two Treatises which he has writ upon the same Subject. He very well shows in the first, that the last Correction of the Vulgar ought to be prefer'd before all other Editions, but yet it is not perfect, and he at the same time shows that

*Petr. Lopez*  
Lib. 1. Con-  
trovers. In-  
troduct. ad  
stud. Sacr.  
Litt. Edit.  
Madrid.  
Ann. 1555.  
in Ep. ad  
Clem. VIII.

that it is impossible to Correct the Vulgar without understanding of the Holy Languages. I cannot however believe what he says in the beginning of his Work, where he observes, that having been order'd by the Sovereign Council of the Inquisition to read the Censures of several Books, he had plainly found that the Hereticks had corrupted the ancient Latin Interpreters Translation in many places. He may perhaps have mistaken the various readings, whereof there are a great many in the ancient Copies of the Vulgar, and especially in *Spain*, for Corruptions.

*Petr. Lopez Lib. 2. Concord. Sacrar. Edit. Hebr. & Gr. Sept. cum Vulg.* In his second Treatise, where he endeavours to reconcile the different Editions of the Bible with the Vulgar, he at first defends the Authority of the Hebrew Text, and the Greek *Septuagint* Translation, which he looks upon as Authentick, as well as the Vulgar. Instead of condemning the Hebrew, and *Septuagint*, as several then did in *Spain*, the more to authorize the Vulgar, He affirms, That nothing authorizes more the Vulgar, than the preserving of the Authority of the Hebrew Text, and *Septuagint* Translation. To conclude, he does not say that the Vulgar is so Correct, but that it has at present some faults. Thus we see how this Divine has maintain'd the Vulgar, without destroying the Authority of the Original, or the ancient Greek Translation. He has follow'd this way of Reconciliation for the agreeing of the different Opinions which were then in *Spain*, concerning the true Edition of the Bible, by reason of the Decree of the Council of *Trent*; and things went so far, as he observes, that several began to deny there was any true Bible, because there were faults in all.

*Guill. Lindan. de Opt. Gen. Interpret. Edit. Colon. An. 1590. Lib. 1.* *Guillelmus Lindanus* shows not so much Judgment in his Treatise concerning the true way of Translating, as this *Spanish* Doctor, He is too vehement against the Protestants Modern Translations, as if a Learned Protestant who would deal clearly, could not Translate the Scripture as well as a Catholick. It is true, we may in some measure excuse his heats against the Protestants, who accus'd either thro Ignorance or Malice the Fathers of the Council of *Trent*, as if their Decree concerning the Authority of the Vulgar had been injurious to Religion. He quotes in the same place a Hebrew Copy, which he affirms to be about 850 years old, for the authorizing of the Vulgar; but he herein shows that he was not very understanding in this Tongue.

Altho

Altho *Lindanus* defends the Authority of the Vulgar, and prefers it before all the Editions of the Bible, he however takes notice of several faults therein; and he accuses not only the Transcribers, but also the Latin Interpreter, who according to him cannot be restor'd without the understanding both of Greek and Hebrew. Wherein he Condemns the Divines of *Paris* and *Louvain*, who Corrected the Vulgar by the Latin Copies only, and to show that we cannot exactly Correct the Latin Edition without having recourse to the Original Hebrew, he sets down for Example, Chap. 3. *Gen. Vers. 15.* where he affirms, That we ought not to read *ipsa*, as we at present do, but *ipse*, because we ought to determine the variety of the Reading in the Latin Translation by the Original Hebrew, which in this place is very clear.

The same Author was so thoroughly perswaded, that the Copies of the Vulgar which were read in his time was full of faults, that he Publish'd a New Edition of the Psalter, and he observes in the Title of this Edition, that he had Corrected this Book in above Six hundred places; and after having Explain'd the Method he observ'd in this Correction, he adds, That he has not yet Corrected all the faults. He however prefers the Latin Translation before the Original Hebrew at present. To conclude, He car'd not much tho he multiply'd the various reading of the Bible, because he was of this Opinion, that whatever mischance happen'd to the Holy Scriptures; whether it was that they were Corrupted by Hereticks, or wholly lost, Religion would always endure by the help of Tradition.

*Isaac Levita*, at the same time very Learnedly answer'd *Lindanus*, alledging several Reasons in defence of the Authority of the Hebrew Text. Having been a Jew he retain'd yet something of that great Zeal which the Jews have for the Text of the Bible, not suffering them to be accus'd of having Corrupted their Copies. He however affirms, That he has seen a Hebrew Copy of the Psalms, where in Psalm 22. Verse 17. was *Caru*, as the *Septuagint* and *St. Jerom* heretofore read in the same place; so that according to him the Jews about 600 years ago chang'd this reading into *Caru*, which is the present reading, and was in the Margin of this ancient Copy.

R r r

The

Despeires.

The Divines who would be more thoroughly instructed about the Authority of the Hebrew Text, and the two ancient Translations receiv'd in the Church, ought to read *Despeires's* Book upon this Subject; where he particularly examines the Authority of these three Texts. Altho he seems not to have thoroughly understood the Oriental Tongues, he has however Collected the best he could find in other Authors, giving sometimes his own Judgment very patly.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*Judgment upon some other Catholick Authors who have made Criticisms upon the Bible, and chiefly of Father Morin.*

Andr. Masius.

Altho *Masius* has made no Criticism upon the whole Bible; he has however Explain'd many things which relate to the Criticism of the ancient Greek Editions, in the Prefaces to his Notes, and Commentary upon the History of *Joshua*. He is not of Opinion that *Moses* Compos'd the Five Books of the Law as we at present have them; and besides he Establishes, as we have already observ'd, these Scribes or Publick Writers, who Collected the acts of what pass'd of most Importance in the Hebrew Commonwealth. As this Author was very Learned in the Hebrew and Syriack Tongues, and had read the Jewish Books in their Original; he thoroughly understood the Criticism of the Scripture.

Prefat. Com. in Jos.

Joan. Mar. pro Edit. Vulg.

*Mariana* a Learned Jesuit, has writ a Treatise in defence of the Vulgar Edition; where he Examines not only the ancient Latin Interpreters Translation, but also the Hebrew Text, the Greek *Septuagint*, and the *Chaldean* Translations. He has moreover in the same Treatise inserted many useful Questions which he very judiciously resolves, only he is sometimes too short upon his Subject, and Examines not diligently enough Matters which ought

ought to be more largely Treated of. For Example, when he speaks of the Authors of the Holy Scriptures, after having observ'd the great Difficulties in resolving of these sort of Questions, he hardly says any thing else, following herein what *Theodorus* had already writ in his Etymologies. Chap. 2.

When he speaks of the *Jews* and the Hebrew Copies; he seems not to have thoroughly understood this Matter, or to have been able to read the Rabbins Books which he quotes. Wherefore he is not altogether exact in what he says, concerning the Affairs of the *Jews*, whom he accuses of having Corrupted their Copies of the Bible, having no other Proofs hercof but what he has taken from the Fathers, whereas he ought diligently to have enquir'd in a Matter of this Importance, whether there was any probability in the Reasons which the Fathers alledge against the *Jews*. He afterwards speaks of another Corruption of the Hebrew Text by the *Jews*, which he ascribes to a certain Assembly of them at *Tyberias*, in the beginning of the Sixth Century: but as he understood not this Subject, he often falls into Errors in speaking of the *Jews*. He also in the same place adds, That since this Assembly, the *Jews* have not Corrected, or rather Corrupted their Copies; and that the *Massoret* Criticism, has hinder'd any Modern Alterations, *Neq; ab eo tempore, says he, convenerunt ex omnibus locis, ut communi consensu novas fraudes necerent, & libri Massoreth diligentia satis cautum videbatur, ne libri sacri immutari facile possent.* Chap. 7.

The same *Mariana* does the *Jews* more Justice in defending them against those who accus'd them of having alter'd all the Significations of the Hebrew words, and who affirm'd that we ought not herein to rely, either upon *St. Jerom*, or the *Septuagint*. I pass by what he says in this same Treatise concerning the *Chaldean*, *Syriack*, and *Greek* Translations; because we may find the same in many other Books. He Treats much better of the Vulgar Edition which he affirms to be *St. Jerom's*, at least most part of it, when he Explains the Decree of the Fathers of the Council of *Trent*, who declar'd this Translation Authentick; He judiciously observes that this Decree hinders not, but we may better Translate several places of the Vulgar. *Contendimus, says he, Hebraica, Græcæq; haud quaquam à Tridentinis patribus rejecta esse; Latina quidem probarem neque ita tamen, ut loca quaedam apertius, aut etiam magis proprie verti posse negent.* He also proves *ibid.*



proves by the Authority of the most Learned Divines who have writ upon this Subject, that the Vulgar has its faults as well as the other Translations of the Scripture, and lays part of these faults upon the Latin Interpreter, who was not infallible.

Chap. 22. He moreover throughly Examines the Dispute which was much banded in his time in *Spain*, concerning the Authority of the Vulgar, which many look'd upon as a Divine Work; because they affirm'd that *St. Jerom* was not barely an Interpreter, but a Prophet, who had been directed by the Spirit of God for the Exact Translating of the Holy Scriptures. For the better clearing of this Difficulty, he has set down the Arguments both of one side and the other; which he however does after such a manner that one may easily perceive that he prefer'd their Opinion who deny'd that *St. Jerom* was a Prophet. *Si quid nostrum, says he, Testimonium valet nobis etiam ea sententia ad veritatem propensa videbatur.*

Fa. Morin. There is no one who has writ more, or with greater Learning upon the Criticism of the Bible than Father *Morin* Priest of the Oratory; as there are many Persons at present who blindly follow his Opinions, without having throughly examin'd them, it is fit we should make a more particular Examination hereof. He designing to Publish a Second Edition of the *Septuagint*, according to the Copy of the Vatican, & to Print in the *French Polyglot*, the Hebrew Samaritain Copy of the *Pentateuch*, from that time did what he could to destroy the present Hebrew Text, thereby to make the *Septuagint* Translation, and the Hebrew Samaritain *Pentateuch*, to be the more esteem'd; as if the Hebrew Jewish Text was Corrupted in most places where it differs from the Greek *Septuagint* Translation, the Hebrew Samaritain Copy, and the Vulgar. He thought he should by this means do the Church a great deal of Service in defending by all ways possible the ancient Translations which she had approved of by a long use of them: But he consider'd not perhaps that the Church by authorizing the ancient *Septuagint* Translation, and the new one of *St. Jerom's*, never Condemn'd the Hebrew Text, nor accus'd the Jews of having Corrupted it.

No. 1620. This System of Father *Morin's* is in all the Books which he has Printed upon the Bible; First, In his Preface to his new Edition of the *Septuagint*, he does all he can to lessen the Authority of the

the present Hebrew Text, and to set up the Samaritain *Pentateuch*, and the Greek *Septuagint*. He has also follow'd the same Method in his Ecclesiastical Meditations upon the Samaritain *Pentateuch*, in his Dissertation concerning the sincerity of the Holy Text, in his Samaritain *Opuscula's*; And lastly, In his Exercitations upon the Bible. He has fill'd most of his Works with long Digressions, where he has found any occasion for the diminishing the Authority of the present Hebrew Text. As he has Collected in his Exercitations upon the Bible, whatever he has said in his other Books upon this Subject, we need only make some Observations upon this last Work, which we may afterwards apply to his other Works.

Father *Morin* has divided his Exercitations upon the Bible into two parts, wherein he Examines the sincerity of the Hebrew and Greek Text. He at first Publish'd only the first Part, which has since his Death been Reprinted with the second Part, wherein he makes a Criticism upon several Books which the Jews fancy are very ancient, although they really are not so. He declares at the very beginning that his Design is to encounter the Protestants, who allow of no other Rule of their Religion, but the Originals of the Bible, as if it was not certain that those Originals have been lost, and that these which we have at present are full of faults; whence he concludes, that we ought not to enquire for true Copies of the Holy Scripture any where but in the Catholick Church. *Quaramus ergo, says he, divina oracula in Fa. Morin Eccllesia, & ab Ecclesia, eaq; non de alienigenarum nedum hostium L. 1. Exercit. 1. C. 1. Manibus, sed de Ecclesia Pastophoris & Archivis promamus, & excipiamus.* No one can deny, but that the Hebrew and Greek Copies which the Protestants call Originals, have indeed been alter'd in many places; but we ought not for all that to lay them wholly aside, and follow only the ancient Translations, whether Greek or Latin, which by long use the Church has authoriz'd: but we ought to restore as well as we can these first Originals of the Bible, both by the present Hebrew Text, and by the ancient Translations of the Scripture, according to the Method which I have already largely Explain'd; and altho we may establish a certain Rule of our belief, by the Translations which the Church has approv'd of, the same Church has not declar'd these Translations to be infallible in all places, and that there cannot be made any other more exact. Wherefore we ought herein to

to Moderate the Opinion of Father *Morin*, who under pretence of defending the Authority of the ancient Translations receiv'd by the Church, has done all he could to destroy the Authority of the Hebrew Text, as we at present have it from the *Jews*.

There is a Medium to be kept betwixt this Opinion and that of the Protestants, and thus we may do Justice both to *Jews* and *Christians*, to the *Roman Catholick* Doctors, and the most Judicious Protestants, who have never affirm'd that the present Hebrew Copies were free from all faults. If we must wholly submit our selves as Father *Morin* affirms we must, to the *Septuagint* Translation, because the Church and Apostles have approv'd of it, and that the Apostles thought there was no Necessity for the making of a new one, why has St. *Jerom's* Translation been so favourably receiv'd, which Father *Morin* also affirms we ought to submit to, because the same Church has judg'd it to be free from the least faults? how can it be that two Translations which sometimes oppose one another, are not in the least faulty? It is then probable that the Church has propos'd these two Translations to us as Authentick in the same manner as I have already Explain'd; and therefore we cannot maintain Father *Morin's* System, without falling into many Contradictions.

*Ibid.* c. 6. The reason which Father *Morin* alledges, to prove that the *Jews* have designedly Corrupted their Copies of the Bible is, because there was, says he, amongst them till the time of the *Talmud*, a certain *Sanhedrin* or Senate, which all the *Jews* were oblig'd to obey; This proof, I say, seems to me to be of no Consequence, because the Rabbins whose Testimonies he alledges mention not the Scripture at all, but only the Laws and Constitutions which the *Jews* were oblig'd to submit to, as in the Church we are oblig'd to follow the Decisions of Councils, who have the Power of making Decrees, without having the Authority of changing the Holy Scriptures. If it commands any Reformation herein, it is not for the Corrupting of these Holy Books, but only for the making of them more perfect, which hapned to the ancient Latin Translation, after the Decree of the Council of *Trent*. The *Massoret Jews*, as has been already observ'd, have follow'd this Method in Correcting of the Copies, and if they have not always well Corrected them, that proceeds not from any Malice of theirs. To conclude, I speak not here of the Power

Power which the ancient Prophets heretofore had with the *Sanhedrin* in the Republick of the Hebrews, but only of the Authority of the *Sanhedrin* since the Jewish Religion has been abolish'd.

Neither do I find the Reasons which Father *Morin* makes use of to prove that St. *Jerom* might make a new Translation of the Bible, and that on the contrary we may not. I find not I say these Reasons to be wholly convincing. It is true that St. *Jerom* in many places of his Works, affirms that he undertook the making of a new Translation, because the ancient Greek *Septuagint* was much Corrupted; but St. *Jerom* in other places affirms, That the *Septuagint* were often mistaken in their Translation, and therefore if the Modern Translators affirm that there are the same faults in St. *Jerom's* Translation, why will not Father *Morin* suffer them to take the same liberty with the Translation of this Father, as he himself took with the Translation of the *Septuagint*, who were look'd upon then as Prophets, and not barely as Interpreters? Altho Father *Morin* affirms, That all the Copies of the Vulgar were exactly alike, some faults only excepted, which might easily be Corrected by other Copies, there were however as many various readings in the old Copies of the Vulgar before its Correction, as there were in the Hebrew Copies in St. *Jerom's* time; and therefore if this was a sufficient reason for St. *Jerom* to make a new Translation of the Bible, we methinks seem to have the same reason for Translating of the Bible into Latin anew; But St. *Jerom* had without doubt other reasons for his entring upon this Work, which he himself sets down in his Commentaries.

Lastly, by St. *Jerom's* Example we learn that we ought not wholly to reject the Protestants Modern Translations, since he made use of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotian's* Greek Translations. Altho we have already shown it would have been well if the Modern Translations had not deviated so much from the ancient ones, they may however be very useful in some places where they seem to have expressed the sense better than the ancient ones. Father *Morin* himself is oblig'd to own these Translations to be useful, so as they were not made in Deviation to the ancient ones; but they who apply themselves to the study of the Bible, regard not so much these personal faults, as Truth it self, and St. *Jerom* despis'd not the Translations of *Aquila*,

*Lib. 1. Exercit. 5. C. 1.*

*Ibid.*

*Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodorian*; altho he knew they were made by these Interpreters in Derision of the *Septuagint* Translation.

Lib. 1.  
Exerc. 6.  
C. 1.

I pass by Father *Morin's* ways of Reconciliation, which he sets down at large, to justify in some sort the ancient Greek Translation, as also the Latin one in those places where they seem to deviate from the Hebrew Text. He finds it to be so difficult a piece of Work, that he owns himself to be the first Author of this Reconciliation. *Quem autem*, says he, *in hoc opere sequar neminem habeo, res est enim omnibus fere intacta, imo vix bene cognita.* It would however be very hard to find any thing in Father *Morin's* Discourse which had not been observ'd by other Authors. He besides lays down several ways of Reconciliation, which were good in St. *Augustin's* time, when the *Septuagint* were look'd upon as Prophets inspir'd by God for the making of an exact Translation of the Scripture; but we are not at present so much prejudic'd in favour of the ancient Greek Translation.

ibid. c. 2.

It is true that the Hebrew Tongue in it self without the Vowel Points which the *Massoret Jews* have added to the Hebrew Text, may be interpreted several ways, and we ought hereto to ascribe part of the various Interpretations; but I am of Opinion, that we ought not with Father *Morin* to say, That this way of writing Hebrew proceeds from God himself, who by this means would make men to submit themselves to the Judgment of the Church for the Interpretation of the Scripture. We may also by the same reason say, That God would have the Mahometans submit to their Doctors for the Interpretation of the *Alcoran*, because it, as well as the Hebrew Text of the Bible is writ in a Tongue which in it self is as uncertain as the Hebrew. But without flying to the secret Decrees of God; it is certain, that the Hebrew agrees herein with the Arabick, Chaldee, and Syriack Tongues, which in themselves are very imperfect, not having Vowels enough to fix the reading of their words.

ibid.

I confess I understand not another reason, which Father *Morin* in the same place alledges, of the different way of writing of one and the same Hebrew word. He has recourse to the Divine Providence, who would that by the pronouncing of one word only we should understand many things, as the Superiour Angels, according to St. *Thomas*, know things by more Universal Species;

Species; and which represent more Objects than those of the inferior Angels. *Hanc cognitionis Angelica Prærogativam*, says Father *Morin*, *adumbrat Divina lingua Hebraica scriptio, cum unica dictione velut universali quadam specie & imagine, tot significationes nobis representat, unoq; lecto vocabulo, multos sensus colligit, velut peritus Philosophus in uno principio plurimas statim prospicit conclusiones.* One had need have a quick wit, and be well vers'd in the Subtilties of the Platonick and Cabbalistical Philosophy to understand the force of this Argument.

The ignorance of the *Jews* according to Father *Morin*, is another means, whereby to reconcile the ancient Interpreters with the Hebrew Text. As they understand not the proper Signification of most of the Hebrew words, we ought to follow the ancient Interpreters who better understood the Hebrew Tongue. But as this ignorance in the Hebrew Tongue is very ancient, and proceeds from the Tongue's having been lost, we ought not so much herein to cry out against the Rabbins, as against the misfortune of their Tongue. The *Jews* perhaps which St. *Jerom* made use of in the making of his new Translation, understood Hebrew no better than the Rabbins of these latter Ages. St. *Jerom*, as has already been observ'd, was perswaded that the Hebrew Tongue was very uncertain; and therefore he consulted the most understanding Jewish Doctors of his time. Let us therefore imitate St. *Jerom*, and consult not only the ancient *Jews*, but also those of our time, and joyn them together for the restoring as much as possibly we can a Tongue which has been lost. In a word, if the Ignorance of the *Jews* has been so great as Father *Morin* affirms it to have been in several places of his Works, what Authority can he give to St. *Jerom's* Vulgar Latin Translation made from the Hebrew, since the knowledge he had of the Hebrew Tongue he had learn'd from the *Jews* of his time.

Lastly, Father *Morin* to prove infallibly that the Rabbins are very ignorant of their Tongue, quotes at large the words of *Forsterus* a Lutheran Doctor; but although *Forsterus* was a Hebrew Professor, he makes appear by his Dictionary, that he had never read the Rabbins Books. The Commendations which *Beza* bestows upon this Author, signifie nothing as to the matter in hand, because *Beza* understood not Hebrew. *Forsterus* found fault with the Rabbins, only because he would defend

the Opinions of his Patriarch *Luther*, who cry'd down the Rabbins Books, only because the Protestants of his time who had studied the Rabbins, had despis'd his Translation as not being exact.

*ibid. C. 12.* Seeing it would take up too much time, and perhaps be tedious to make an exact Analysis of Father *Morin's* Book, I shall conclude my Reflections with his Observation how an Act may be two ways Authentick, *Aliud*, says he, *authenticum est natura sua, aliud per accidens*; when there are two various readings, which are true and agree with the Text, there is only one which can be Authentick of its own Nature, and the other Authentick only by Accident. The reason is, because the Prophet writ but one way, but the Church may have declar'd them both to be Authentick. He confirms his Argument by the Example of *St. Paul*, who might according to him make the Translations of the *Jews*, as also of the Poets which he has quoted in his Epistles, Authentick. *Si enim Judaeorum traditioni, Poetarum Ethnicorum sententiis id juris arrogare potuit Apostolus, ecclesia universa variis sacrorum codicum lectionibus.* He however affirms, That the latter reading which, to use his own terms, is only accidentally Authentick, because it is only Humane, has a Divine Authority as soon as the Church has declar'd it to be such, for as much as the Authority of the whole Church is herein the same with that of the Prophets: *Non enim debilius censei debet Ecclesia universa, quam Prophetarum & Apostolorum autoritas, & αναμαστρησια.* I shall leave the Divines to Judge of the Truth of this Maxim, and of the Consequences which may from thence be drawn.

To conclude; I have stay'd longer upon Father *Morin's* Books than upon others, because most of the Divines take him for their great Author upon this Subject: It would perhaps be convenient to make an exact Criticism of all his Works upon the Bible, for the taking away the Prejudices some have in favour of him; but besides that that would take up too much time, I am of Opinion that what has been already said, will be sufficient to show that we ought to Examine more thoroughly his Opinions. This however hinders not, but that there are many useful and very learned things in his Books.

Some Protestants have endeavour'd to answer Father *Morin*, but besides that they were prejudic'd in favour of the *Jews*, their

Answers

Answers are so weak, that by reading of them one would easily think that Father *Morin* had reason for every thing he says, in his Books against the Hebrew Text of the *Massoret's*, Mr. *De Muis* has more judiciously defended the Hebrew Text, and at the same time answer'd some of Father *Morin's* Propositions. But he would have done well to have been more Moderate, and not under pretence of more Strenuously opposing Father *Morin*, who has shown too much Zeal in defending the ancient Translations approv'd of by the Church to have flown to the other Extremity, by ascribing to the *Massoret* several Privileges which belong not to it. Altho Mr. *De Muis* understood Hebrew, he seems not to have had all the Learning requisite for the answering of Father *Morin's* Books. It is not sufficient to have some knowledge of the Hebrew Tongue, he ought besides perfectly to have understood the matter in question. He will for example have us to credit the Testimony of *Arias Montanus*, concerning the fidelity of the Hebrew Copies, as if it was not certain that *Arias Montanus* has too excessively commended the exactness of the Jewish Transcribers, in the writing out of their Copies. which we may add, That *Arias Montanus*, who is Mr. *De Muis* great Author, never understood the *Massoret* which he has so much commended.

Mr. *De Muis* Treatises however against Father *Morin* may be of great use for the Correcting of several of Father *Morin's* Propositions, and especially that call'd, *The Defence of the Authority of the Hebrew Edition*; wherein he shows he is not so much conceited of the sincerity of this Text, as several Protestants who have look'd upon him as one of their Protectors in this Affair: *Neg; vero,* says he, *Hebraicam Editionem sic tueri est animus, ut nihil prorsus impuri habere affirmemus.* He however is mistaken in the same place, when he pretends to prove the great exactness of the *Jews* in the preserving of their Copies, by reason of the great agreement there is amongst all the Copies of the *Jews* in what Countrey soever they are.

What he has in the same place observ'd of the Vulgar, which he affirms is not wholly exact, is much more probable, and he has judiciously observ'd, that this ancient Translation may in many places be Corrected and made more exact, especially if these Corrections are made by Learned Persons. *Alia enim est vulgi,* says he, *alia doctorum ratio.* As for the two other Treatises

tises where Mr. *De Muis* has defended the Authority of the Hebrew Text in answering of Father *Morin*, it would have been well if these two Treatises had been larger, and that he had not contented himself with answering only some Chapters of his Works, which requir'd a more substantial and larger answer. Let us now see what helps we can draw from Protestant Authors for the understanding of the Scripture.

## CHAP. XIX.

### *Judgment upon some Protestant Authors who have writ upon the Bible.*

**A**Lthough most of the Protestant Authors who have writ upon the Bible, are very conceited and deluded, we may however find many very useful things for the understanding of the Scripture in them. As they have apply'd themselves wholly to this Study, it was in a manner impossible but they should find out some things new. Wherefore they who will be thoroughly instructed in the Criticism of the Scripture, ought not to neglect their Books. We find that *St. Jerom* himself not only read the Hereticks Books of his time; but that he Profited from the reading of them. *St. Augustin* very carefully read the Books of *Tysonius* a Donatist upon this Subject. Lastly, *Origen's* greatest Enemies could not forbear the reading of his Learned Commentaries upon the Holy Scripture; and admiring of him at the same time as they Condemn'd him as an Innovator.

First, we ought not to rely upon Authors who have writ upon matters of Controversie; because in Disputes the Medium is seldom kept, which is necessary to be observ'd for the finding out of Truth. An Author ought no longer to be credited when he declares himself to be of a Party, because he suits all things to his Prejudices. We ought thus to Judge of most of the Books which the Protestants have writ against *Bellarmin*, where the Holy Scripture is treated of. *William Whitaker* an English Protestant,

stant, who was one of the first who oppos'd *Bellarmin*, shows too much Passion throughout his whole Work. He however does his Adversary this Justice, as to commend his great Learning in the Holy Scriptures, and he wonders that a new Sect of Monks, who to use his own terms, call themselves of the Company of Jesus, should Study so much the Bible.

The first Tome of *Bellarmin's* Controversie was no sooner Publish'd at *Ingolstadt*, but all the Protestants were in a manner stagger'd; and this made the most Learned of that Sect oppose the new Book of this Learned Jesuit who had taught them how to Dispute, and most of them only made use of *Bellarmin's* Objections, as Proofs against him. In a word, *Whitaker* shows that he feared these new Monks as he calls them, who wanted neither Skill nor Understanding. *Recentes Monachi, Subriles Theologi, ibid. disputatores vehementes & pertimiscendi, quos nova ac prateritis seculis inaudita Societas Jesu ad Ecclesia Religionisq; calamitatem edidit.* *Whitaker* despises all the ancient Monks as idle and drowsy fellows, whereas the Jesuits according to him, apply'd themselves wholly to study: *Jesuita aliud consilium sequuti, ex illa umbra pigrity inertiaq; pristina, in qua ceteri monachi consensescere solebant, ad labores capessandos, artes tractandas pro Communi statu subeundam perferendamq; contentionem prodierunt.* He acknowledges that *Bellarmin* deals more clearly in Disputing than the other Divines who had gone before him, and that he had invented new Systems upon this account.

Lastly, *Whitaker* shows by his Discourse, that the Jesuits Disputed boldly, and openly despis'd the Protestants. *Equidem non ignoro, says he, quanta sit istorum hominum confidentia, qua jactatio, quod os & vultus in disputando, ut unum hoc didicisse putes quemadmodum adversarios quam gloriosissime contemnant, non quo pacto ad argumenta melius respondeant.* To conclude, I have enlarg'd upon *Whitaker's* Opinion of *Bellarmin*; because this may serve as a Key for the understanding of many Books which have since been writ by the Protestants of *France, England, and Germany* against *Bellarmin*, nay things have gone so far, as several Protestants have confounded the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* upon this Point with that of *Bellarmin's*. Wherefore they who would Profit by reading of these Protestants Books, ought to read *Bellarmin* before; but as it is very rare but that in Disputes we take one side or other, I am of Opinion, that we ought rather to

consult



consult those Authors who have none of these Disputes in their Books.

*Sixtinus  
Amam.  
Anti. Bib.*

Secondly, There is another sort of Protestants, who have not indeed writ Books of Controversie; but yet have writ with Passion against the common Opinions of the Church concerning the Scripture, especially since the Vulgar Editions being authorized by the Fathers of the Council of *Trent*; I reckon *Sixtinus Amama* amongst these Authors, who has oppos'd the ancient Latin Interpreter, in a Book wherein there is a great deal of Learning, but very little Judgment, these sort of Books are however useful, if we carefully read them, because one may make use of this great Learning which they affect for the opposing of them. *Amama's* design was to show that the Church of *Rome* is become barbarous, only by authorizing of the *Septuagint* and Vulgar Translations; whereas according to him we ought to rely wholly upon the Hebrew Text. For the compassing of his Design he has made use of whatsoever he could find in any Books upon this Subject, whether they were writ by Catholics or Protestants, wherein he shows his little Judgment, and heats against the Council of *Trent*. For the Testimonies he brings, sufficiently demonstrate the wise management of the Bishops assembled in this Council, in Relation to the Authority which they allow'd the Vulgar; Wherefore we may make use of *Amama's* Book against himself and the other Protestants, who have given an ill Construction to the words of the Council, with a design only to oppose it. In a word, he ought to have follow'd herein the Opinion of the most Learned Divines whom he quotes, who have judiciously Explain'd the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, without blaming it for having never so little diminish'd the Authority of the Hebrew Text.

The same Author has spoke with as little Judgment of the *Septuagint* Translation, and other things wherein he accuses the Latin Church of Barbarism; Most of the Authors whose Authority he quotes are Catholics, and therefore he ought not to ascribe the Opinion of some Catholick Doctors who understood not the Criticism of the Scripture to the whole Western Church. This Concededness of *Sixtinus Amama* appears yet greater in his Second Book, where he chiefly endeavours to Correct the faults which he pretends there are in the Vulgar Translation. But besides that he Corrects it very improperly in many places, we need

need only observe with the most Learned Catholick Doctors that there are some faults in this ancient Translation, which he ought to have excus'd, because there are more considerable ones in all others. The Protestants who have condemn'd the Ancient Latin Interpreter, have not seriously examin'd him, and they have not consider'd that he agrees often with the most Learned Rabbins, where the Modern Interpreters deviate from him.

We may joyn with *Sixtinus Amama* the Book of *Guilielmus Schickardus*, call'd *Behinat Happeruschim*, that is to say, *The Examination of Interpretations*. He examines in this Work the Hebrew Text, the Chaldean Paraphrases, the *Septuagint* Translation, the *Massoret*, the *Cabbale*, and the different ways of the *Jews* Explaining of the Scripture, but his Method is too much Jewish, and can not be useful to all Persons. He affects too much to seem Learned in the Rabbins Books, altho he is out sometimes in Translating of them.

If *Hottinger* had been a little Moderate in his Works, and had not spent time about Niceties, he might have been useful for the understanding of the Literal Sence of the Scripture. But as he always makes himself a Party, and Compos'd his Works with too much precipitancy, he is very often mistaken; one of the best Works upon this Subject, is that which he writ against the Samaritain Exercitations of Father *Morin*, and yet he is not altogether exact even in this Work.

I should not speak here of *Alexander More*, were it not that he is of some Reputation amongst the Protestants. His Book however call'd *Causa Dei*, wherein he Examines the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, does not speak him a Man Learned in the Criticism of the Bible. He sometimes spends time about Niceties taken out of the Rabbins Books to show us he had read them: But by what he says, we may certainly know that he understood them not, when he quotes, for Example the Book of *Elias Levitay* Intitl'd *Massoret Hammofferet*, he speaks of it as if it was a Manuscript which some of his Friends had lent him; and yet it is certain that there never was any other Manuscript of this Book than the Copy which the Author gave the Printer, unless some one has taken the pains to write it out from the Printed Book. To conclude, he acknowledges there are faults in the Holy Scriptures, and that it is a common misfortune to

*Guil.  
Schick.  
Behinat  
Happeruschim.*

*Hotting.  
Exercit.  
anti Mor.*

*Alex.  
More Causa  
sa Dei.*

to all Books. His way of reasoning is not always exact; and as he Treats of Questions he understood but by halves, and quotes Authors he had never read, he sometimes falls into mistakes, as when he reckons *Cajetan* amongst the Persons who being Learned in the Hebrew Tongue, took no great notice of the Vulgar; as if *Cajetan* had not himself confess'd he understood not this Language. But let us quit these Notions of *More's*, and search for some Protestant Authors who better understand the Criticism of the Bible.

## C H A P. XX.

Judgment of some other Protestant Authors, who have Criticis'd upon the Bible, and especially of Ludovicus Capellus.

Lud. Cap.  
Critic. SACR.

WE have already at the beginning of this Work spoke something in general of the Criticism of *Ludovicus Capellus*, Hebrew Professor at *Saumur*; and as this Criticism ought carefully to be read for the thorough understanding of the Scripture, it is convenient that we speak hereof more particularly than we have already done. The Author's chief design was to observe as well as possibly he could the various readings of the Hebrew Text of the Bible. Altho he was a Protestant, he was not carried away with the usual Prejudices of those of his Sect; he freely marks all the faults which he thinks are in the present Hebrew Copies, and at the same time answers all the Objections which may be made against him in a matter of so great Importance as that was, especially by the Protestants who acknowledge no other Principle of their Religion but the Holy Scriptures. He supposes that notwithstanding all the Alterations which have happen'd to the Holy Scriptures, Religion may be sufficiently grounded upon what yet remains of the Bible entire to us.

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He proves then first, the various readings of the Hebrew Text by the Text it self, by comparing together the different places, where the same words, and same Periods are variously set down. *Aliquando*, says he, *litera, vox, periodus integra omittitur, additur, permutatur*. He spends several Chapters in his first Book, in giving different Examples of these alterations, some of which consist in whole Periods, which have either been added, or left out, or transpos'd. *Infinitem esset*, says he, *recensere, & in unum congerere omnia hujus additionis vel omissionis exempla, qua colligi undiq; possent ex locis Parallelis qua habentur in Libris Chronico-rum, Esdra, & Nehemia, in iis qua habent cum aliis sacris commu-nia*. We may however say, That as *Capellus* wholly endeavour'd to give the various readings of the Bible, he has sometimes too much multiply'd them, and I have at the beginning of this Work given some Rules whereby we may know that what he makes a various reading is not always so.

Secondly, He has observ'd the various readings of the Hebrew Text, which may be prov'd by the ancient Translations from this Text, and altho we cannot say that this Method is wholly exact, because we ought not to lay the faults of the Translation upon the Original, there are however some places where the various readings of the Original taken from out of the Translations made from them, are so plain, that we cannot doubt thereof. Wherefore we may indeed make fewer Variations than *Capellus*, according to this Method does; but we ought not wholly to reject it as false.

To conclude, This Work may be useful for the reconciling of the different Interpretations of the Hebrew Text, especially if we joyn hereto the various Significations which most of the Hebrew words have. He besides gives us the liberty of changing the present Pointing invented by the *Massoret Jews*, which consequently we may forsake when we find a better Sense. Wherefore he lays down new Rules for the Reforming of the Grammar, by preserving only the Consonants of the Hebrew Text; which Grammar would be much more Abridg'd than the present one, because there would be no distinction betwixt good part of the Conjugations of Verbs, and betwixt many other things, which at present limit the Hebrew Text. *Capellus* however seems not to have enough respected the Authority of the *Massoret*, which is not really infallible, as has already been observ'd;

T t t

Lib. 1. C. 2.  
Lib. 6. C. 11

serv'd; but it is grounded upon a Tradition which ought to be more esteem'd than it is by *Capellus* in his Criticism.

*Defens. Crit. N. 8.* The same Author has joyn'd with the same Volume the Answer of *Buxtorf* the Son, who had writ against this Work before it was Printed, and as he seem'd to lay down Principles which wholly ruin'd the Religion of the Protestants, who rely not at all upon Tradition, he answers that the various readings which he had observ'd, related not to Matters of Faith, or Morality, and that the worst Copies of the Bible are sufficient for that purpose: *Non semel monui*, says he, *salutarem fidem, & morum dogmata vel ex vitiosissimo codice & corruptissima quaq; versione à pio & veritatis verè studioso lectore ad fidem ingenerandam, atq; fovendam, & augendam hauriri posse.*

He was oblig'd to maintain this Maxim according to the Principles of those of his Sect; but I am afraid if we examine his Criticism more throughly, we shall find that he has in a manner destroy'd the certainty of the Scripture which is the only Principle of the Protestants; for besides the various readings, he gives every one the liberty of adding the Vowel Points, which he thinks will make a better Sense without taking any notice of those which are at present in the Text, and the reason he gives, is because these Vowel Points have been invented by *Jews*, whom

*Lib. 6. C. 4.* we ought not wholly to believe. *Persona enim à qua illa est (Punctuationis) ratio, cum sint Judai, nobis eam commendare, non potest aut debet:* But since we have the Hebrew Text from the *Jews*, we ought methinks rather to believe them herein than any others; because the question is concerning a constant way of reading, which can only have been preserv'd amongst them. Besides after having taken out all the Vowel Points out of the Hebrew Text, he has recourse to the ancient Vowels call'd *Ehevi*, that is to say, *Aleph, He, Van,* and *Jod*; now he acknowledges that these ancient Vowels being often not mark'd in the Text, the reading remains very uncertain; besides that, I have already shown that the Transcribers added or left out these same Vowels at their pleasure, and therefore *Capellus* can have nothing of the Hebrew Text but the Consonants. Now most of these Consonants, being according to him, the one like another, have occasion'd great Confusion in the writing of them out, and I have prov'd by several Manuscripts, that this Confusion is greater than it usually is suppos'd to be; and therefore according to

*Capel-*

*Capellus's* System, there is hardly any certainty in the Hebrew Text. The little however which we have of the Hebrew Text, is according to him sufficient for the Establishment of Religion.

Lastly, It is convenient for us to observe that this Work of *Capellus's* having been Printed at *Paris*, without his taking care of it, there have some inconsiderable alterations been made which we may find in a Letter which he writ by way of Apology to *Usher*. What is most considerable in this Reformation of *Capellus's* Criticism is, That Father *Morin* who with the Son of the Author Printed this Work, left out something against himself. As *Bootius* and some other Protestants who had been scandaliz'd at *Capellus's* disrespectful way of speaking of the Holy Scriptures, accus'd him of having combin'd with Father *Morin* to destroy the Originals of the Bible; he Printed in his Letter what had been left out in his Criticism concerning the Opinions of Father *Morin*. This we may find in *Page 19.* of this Epistle, and in the following ones, where he very judiciously opposes Father *Morin*.

This same Author had before Publish'd an excellent Treatise intitl'd *Arcanum Punctuationis*, where he plainly shows the late Invention of Points in the Hebrew Text. This first Work of *Capellus*, which was Printed in *Holland*, caus'd a great Clamour amongst the Protestants, who were afraid of it before it was Printed, as if it had been wholly contrary to the Principles of their Religion. *Alexander More*, who had seen it before it was Publish'd, could not but do the Author Justice, *Limatissimo vir ingenio*, says he in speaking of *Capellus*, *& undecumq; doctissimus*, and he afterwards in speaking of this Book in the same place adds, *Opus quantivis pretii, sed à multis Zelo Dei Flagrantibus etiam hic Geneva reformidatum.* *More* also plainly shows that this Zeal of the *Geneva* Protestants was not according to the Truth, since he is of Opinion, that the opinion of *Capellus* agreed with that of *Luthers, Calvins, Zuinglius, Fagius, Mercerus, Drusius, Casabons, Scaligers, Erpenius, Salinarius, Grotius,* and *Heynsius's*; and therefore we cannot say that *Capellus* introduc'd any Novelty; but only better establish'd an Opinion which had been approv'd of by the most Learned and Judicious Protestants. *Nec dubitem*, says *More* in the same place, *quin ejus causa vicerit, si res doctorum suffragiis & autoritate transigatur.* But most of these

these Ministers of *Geneva* are only wilful and ignorant Persons, who may only read the Preface to their first *French Bible Translated from the Hebrew*, and they will find that *Robert Olivetan*, who made this first Translation, Treats very largely upon this question, and *Cappellus* has only made *Robert Olivetan's* Opinion more plain.

The reason of this wilfulness of most of the *German Protestants*, as also of those of *Geneva*, is because they have blindly follow'd the Opinion of the two *Buxtorfs*, concerning the sincerity of the Hebrew Text. *Buxtorf* the Father, who apply'd himself wholly to the Studying of the Hebrew Tongue, and the reading of the Rabbin Books, endeavour'd by all means possible to authorize this Text. Which he did by the help of the *Masseoret*, which we have before spoke of, and he Published upon this account a little Treatise concerning *the Antiquity of Points*. As *Buxtorf* was look'd upon as an Oracle by the Modern Hebraicians, most of them follow'd his Opinion, and not being able to search thoroughly into so difficult a business as that was, they rely'd rather upon his Authority than his Arguments. And that which made *Buxtorf's* Opinion be the more esteem'd, was because it favour'd the Principles of the new Reformation, the Providence of God, said they, being herein to be admir'd, who had preserv'd the Scriptures free from the least faults; they observ'd not that this so extraordinary a Providence was grounded only upon the Superstition and Dreams of the Rabbin, with which the two *Buxtorfs*, the Modern Hebraicians Patriarchs have fill'd their Books. *Cappellus* who had joyn'd the reading of the ancient Interpreters with that of the Rabbin, went a clear contrary way to work, and very plainly show'd that the Opinion of *Buxtorf* the Father, which the Son afterwards defended, was grounded only upon the Rabbin fancies. In a word, what is there else in the Book writ by *Buxtorf* the Son, in answer to that of *Cappellus's*, intitled *Arcanum Punctuationis*, what is there I say else in this Book of *Buxtorf's*, but some insignificant Jewish Learning?

The same *Buxtorf*, who understood that his Book had not so well succeeded, as he had hop'd it would, alter'd his Method in his Anti-Criticism or Defence of the Hebrew Text against the Criticism of *Cappellus*. This last Work of *Buxtorf* the Sons, is worth the reading, especially where he compares the Hebrew Text

Buxtorf.

Buxtorf  
Bib. de  
Antiq.  
Punct.Buxtorf  
Anti-Crit.

Text with the ancient Translations, and examines *Cappellus's* various readings. He is more Moderate in this last Work than in his others, because he had had time to consider the Matter he treated of. But for all this, there are a great many Errors in this Book which the Author would not Correct, because he still persisted in the Defence of his former Opinions, that is to say, his ancient Errors. It would also have been well if he had not mingled so many different Persons, which make the reading tedious. To conclude, he has in some places well enough Corrected *Cappellus's* Criticism, and altho he was prejudic'd in favour of the *Masseoret*, extolling too much the great use we might make thereof, he however speaks hereof better than *Cappellus* does.

Several Protestants especially of *Germany* have wholly follow'd the Opinions of the two *Buxtorfs*, and have done nothing but Copy their Books by changing only of their Method. Thus *Joan. Leusden* Hebrew Professor of *Utrecht* Compos'd some Works, *Leusden's Philol. Heb.* wherein he starts several Questions concerning the Criticism of the Bible, and gives no other Answers thereto but what he found in the Works of *Buxtorf* the Son, who is most of the Northern Protestants great Author.

*Vossius* on the contrary being perswaded that the *Buxtorfs* and their followers had too much esteem'd the Rabbin Dreams, fell into a clear contrary Opinion, which is no less dangerous than the former, as he had studyed Greek more than Hebrew, he made a new System in favour of the ancient Greek Translation, and oppos'd the present Hebrew Text; he had reason to defend the Authority of the *Septuagint* Translation against those who rely wholly upon the *Masseoret* Copies, as if they were wholly free from all faults; but he ought not then to have ascrib'd this Infallibility to the *Septuagint*, or have consider'd them rather as Prophets, than Interpreters. There was a Medium to be kept betwixt these two Extreams, and this is the reason why *Vossius* is as often mistaken in defending of his new System, as those who defend the *Masseoret* Copies are in defending of the *Masseoret*.

In a Question which belongs purely to Criticism, we ought not to rely wholly upon the Authority of the ancient Drs. of the Church, or to make the *Septuagint* Translation to be Divine, because the Apostles made use of it, and the first Fathers call'd the Authors

Joan.  
Leusden's  
Philol. Heb.Isaac Vos.  
De Sep. Int.

Chap. 1.

Authors of this Translation Prophets. The Apostles, as has already been observ'd, prefer'd the Greek Copy before the Original Hebrew, because Greek was then the Mother Tongue of most of those Nations to whom they Preached the Gospel, whereas Hebrew was understood but by very few *Jews*. Besides, the Authority of the Fathers in relation to the *Septuagint* Translation, ought not to be consider'd for the Reasons I have elsewhere allc'd, and if *Vossius* will herein follow the Opinion of the Church, he will find it has prefer'd St. *Jerom's* new Translation made from the Hebrew, before the ancient Vulgar Latin one made from the *Septuagint*. I speak only of the Western Church, because the Greek and most of the other Churches have preserv'd the ancient *Septuagint* Translations. *Vossius* also seems not to have carefully read St. *Jerom's* Works, in not distinguishing what this Father has said only, to accommodate himself to the common Opinions of that time, from his real Opinion. Thus we ought to Explain St. *Jerom's* thought, when he affirms that the *Septuagint* were real Prophets, altho he was not of that Opinion: It is true that the *Septuagint* were not Ignorant of the Hebrew Tongue, as some Modern Authors have affirm'd; but they were not for all that Prophets, and directed by the Spirit of God in the making of their Translation.

As I have already Treated of this ancient Greek Translation, and at the same time have observ'd some of *Vossius's* Paradoxes, we need not stay any longer upon this Subject; I shall only add, that notwithstanding this, *Vossius's* Book is worth the reading, especially where he has defended the *Septuagint*. He has also fill'd this Work with Learned and Judicious Reflections upon the Chronology of the Scripture, but he inveighs too much against the *Jews*, and those who study their Books. He ought to have consider'd that several Learned Persons who have read the Rabbins Books, have known how to distinguish the good from the bad in those Books. But *Vossius* having convers'd only with some Zealous and Ignorant Protestants, who had given him some ridiculous and impertinent Answers, could not moderate himself, nor observe that Medium which was necessary to be kept for the finding out of the Truth; besides he seems to have read nothing of the Rabbins, but only in Father *Morin's* Books, and some other Authors which were no more moderate than he upon this Subject.

Lastly, Besides the Books we have already observ'd, which may

may be useful to those who study the Scripture; we may also add some others which have particularly treated of these Matters, wherein we find several Difficulties of the Bible illustrated. The Books for Example of *Usher* and *Ludovicus Cappellus*, concerning the Sacred Chronology; are full of these Illustrations. *Bochar-* *Usher* Arch-  
*ius* has also Compos'd two great Works intitled *Phaleg*, and *De* *Armigh.*  
*Animalibus Scriptura Sacra*, wherein he has Explain'd many pass- *Lud. Capp-*  
ages of the Bible: But as this Author is very Copious, and seems *Chron.*  
to desire rather to be thought a Learned, than Judicious man, it *Samboch.*  
would be well if these two Works were abridg'd; and that only kept in which may be useful for the understanding of the Scripture. It is true that most of what he says both in the *Phaleg*, and the Book of the Animals spoke of in the Scripture, is only grounded upon Conjectures: but these sort of Conjectures are sometimes useful in that, if we discover not always the Truth; we may however thereby avoid falling into Errors; and herein the last Book which Treats of the Animals spoke of in the Scripture may be of great use to us; for altho we cannot certainly know the Names of many of the Animals mention'd in the Scripture, he sometimes gives us herein insight enough for the excluding of some Animals, which those same Names cannot agree with.

We ought however to observe, that most Authors who have writ upon only one Subject, usually endeavour to set down all things belonging to that Subject; and therefore altho we generally ought to prefer the Authors who have apply'd themselves to certain Subjects before those who have spoke only thereupon by the by, it however often happens that these same Authors become so fond of the Subject they Treat of, that they are not capable of judging rightly of the things in question. I could here give many Examples; but it is enough that we have spoke hereof in general, to the end we may take notice of it.

.CHAP.



## CHAP. XXI.

*A Criticism upon the Prolegomena's before the English Polyglotte, and first upon the three first Discourses concerning the Tongues.*

**M**ost of those who have Publish'd any great Works upon the Bible, have usually put *Prolegomena's* before them, wherein they Explain their Designs, and at the same time propose certain Preliminary Questions upon the Text of the Bible and the Translations. *Walton* who in the English Polyglotte has Collected into six Volumes all the ancient Translations of the Scripture he could meet with, has also added some Preliminary Questions. As his Collection is a more large and exact one, than any of the others which had been before made, we may also say, that he has more thoroughly and with greater exactness than others examin'd these sort of Questions, some of which relate to the Criticism of the Hebrew Text, and the others to the Criticism upon the Translations. He was judicious enough in choosing of the best Authors who had writ before him of the Matters he Treated of, and had understanding enough not blindly to follow the Prejudices of many of the Protestants. But as there is nothing wholly perfect upon this Subject, and wherein we can find no fault; it is fit we should particularly examine these *Prolegomena's*, to the end that they who read them may profit thereby.

There is first this difference betwixt *Walton*, and most of the other Protestants; he was one of those who in *England* are call'd *Episcoparians*, to distinguish them from a Sect of Protestants which are usually call'd *Presbyterians*, or *Puritans*. These first differ not so much from the *Catholicks*, especially in Ecclesiastical Discipline as the others. Wherefore they consult not the Scripture as their only Rule, but they have a respect for the ancient Doctors of the Church, and for Tradition. They retain yet amongst them the Names of Bishops, Priests, and Canons: and they

they have not wholly laid aside the ancient Liturgy, or the other Books wherein the Ceremonies of the *Catholick* Church are contain'd. In a word: The true Religion of the Church of *England* differs very little from the *Romish* Religion in outward appearance; and the Books of those of that Sect agree better with the Opinions of the *Catholicks*, than those of the *Presbyterians*, who follow the Maxims of *Geneva*.

It was necessary to make this Observation, that we might understand what *Walton* was when he compos'd the *Prolegomena's* here in question, and made his great Collection upon the Scripture. Whereunto we may add, that at the time of his composing of this Work, the Episcopal Party was wholly routed, and the Faction of the *Presbyterians* or *Calvinists* was uppermost; and therefore although *Walton* had been capable of being prejudic'd, there is no doubt but he would have kept as distant as possibly he could from the *Presbyterians* Opinions, whom the *Episcoparians* look upon as Schismatics. This is the Reason why we find most of the *Episcoparians* so moderate in their Opinions, who endeavour to keep as distant as they can from the *Presbyterians*: So that we may say of the *English Episcoparians*, what Cardinal *Palavicini* heretofore said upon the like occasion of some learned *Protestants*, That they were rather no *Catholicks*, than *Hereticks*.

Secondly, As it is ordinary for them who undertake any Work, to commend it even to excess, *Walton*, who has publish'd most of the ancient Translations, has done all he could to raise up the Authority of these Translations. Wherefore he chose those Authors which he thought favour'd most his design, observing however almost throughout a certain medium, for fear of being thought to lessen the Authority of the Hebrew Text, by commending too much the ancient Translations of the Scripture. And on the other side, he has not so much extoll'd the Original Hebrew, as to make the ancient Translations unnecessary. This moderation is very judicious, and it would have been well if every thing he affirms had been true, especially in relation to the Translations, which are not so exact as he fancies them.

Thirdly, *Walton's Prolegomena's* being compos'd out of several Books which he has abridg'd, we find not his Principles so well link'd together as they ought to be in a Work of this importance. And besides, as he generally sets down the terms themselves of the Authors whence he has collected them, his Criticism is not altogether so exact

act as it would have been, had he been the only Author of it, and had only read other mens Works, thereby to judge and to pick out only what was true; but perhaps he had not judgement enough to do this. Let us now see in particular whether what we have said in general be true or no.

*Walton* Proleg. 1. *Walton* has compriz'd his *Prolegomena's* within 16 Discourses. In the first he treats of the nature of Tongues in general, of their Rise, and several Alterations. The Proofs he at the beginning alledges to show, that Man was at first born as well with Speech as Reason, are not at all convincing; for it is not a sufficient proof to say, that the first man was born with Speech, because he was born for Society: It is enough that God has given men what was necessary for the inventing of Languages. In a word: God has given men at their birth the power only, as one may say, and not the act it self; neither does it follow that man ought to speak as soon as he was born, because he was created after the likeness of God. On the contrary, he would come much nigher to God, could he express his own conceptions, and understand other mens, some other ways than by Speech, as the Angels do, who have no less a resemblance of God, without speaking. *Diodorus Siculus's* way of explaining the first Rise of Languages, is not so ridiculous or fabulous as *Walton* affirms it is, who could not understand how Tongues could be invented by Nature, and yet differ so much amongst themselves. But here is nothing herein impossible, as I have shown at large in the first Book of this Work in Chap. 14. and 15. where we may find the different Opinions of the Philosophers upon this Subject reconcil'd.

Neither is the History of the Creation, set down in the beginning of *Genesis*, an evident demonstration that God was the Author of the first Tongue, although this is the common receiv'd Opinion amongst Divines; I dare however affirm, that they have not sufficiently consider'd the different ways of speaking in the Scripture. This I have largely explain'd in the places I have just now mark'd out; and I think we ought herein to prefer the Opinion of *St. Gregory of Nyssa*, before the common receiv'd one, because he reconciles as much as possibly he can, Faith with Reason, Philosophy with Divinity, and does not easily multiply miraculous and extraordinary things. Wherefore I have in my first Book very naturally explain'd the Rise of Tongues, and reconcil'd this Explanation with the History of the Creation.

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As for what *Walton* in the same place affirms, that man was no sooner created but he talk'd familiarly with God; that he gave Names to all Animals; and that *Eve* spoke to the Serpent; he can demonstrate nothing from thence; because the Scriptures set down only Matters of Fact, without taking notice of the Times when they hapned; and we cannot for example say, that *Cain* and *Abel* were born at the same time, because their birth is in the same place related. The History of the Scripture is only an Abridgement of what was thought fit to be given to the People; and therefore we ought not to conclude, that the things there related, hapned at the same time, because they are joyn'd together in the Discourse. Besides, we understand not well enough what Tongue *Adam* and *Eve* spoke to God and the Serpent in, thence to conclude that they were born with this first Tongue, which has since been communicated to their Posterity: For we may also thence conclude, that the Serpent was born with this same Tongue, which however has not been communicated to his Posterity.

I pass over many Theological and Cabbalistical Meditations, which *Walton* in this same Discourse sets down, concerning the confusion of Tongues which hapned at the building of the Tower of *Babel*. I have in the same place explain'd with *St. Gregory of Nyssa*, how men were the Authors of this Confusion, and in what sense it ought to be ascrib'd to God. As men have not sufficiently consider'd the several expressions of the Scripture, they have multipl'd the Miracles; and *Walton* has herein follow'd the most common Opinion. To conclude: Although I have quoted several things out of *Lucretius*, to show that Tongues were invented by the first men, I have not alledged them as Proofs, but only more clearly to explain *St. Gregory of Nyssa's* Opinion upon this Subject, which I have prefer'd, before any other, because he reconciles Reason with Religion. Besides, as the Question concerning the invention of the first Tongues, belongs as well to Philosophy as Divinity, it was in a manner necessary to joyn the Opinions of the Philosophers with those of the Divines, to reconcile them together if possible; and this I have done in Chap. 14. and 15. of my first Book. I thought it not necessary to spend time about several frivolous Observations, (some of which are like to the Superstitions of the *Jewish Cabbale*) which *Walton* has inserted into his first Discourse. He perhaps would have done better, to have collected only in his *Prolegomena's* what might be useful to his design: But he has committed the same fault as most Authors do, who think they

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are not exact, without setting down in their own Books whatever they have read in others upon the Subject they treat of.

Proleg. 2.

In the 2d. Discourse the Rise of Letters or Characters is spoken of: And as most Rises are fabulous, we ought not to wonder that there are few things certain in this Discourse, because *Walton* has only set down what had been before observ'd by other Authors, without having examin'd whether they were exact in what they related or no. As when he speaks of the Book entituled, *Sepher Jetsira*, Book of the Creation, and affirms with *Masius*, that the *Jews* make *Adam* to be the Author of it, whereas they ascribe it to *Abraham*. Besides, he proves that Writing was us'd before *Enoch's* time, by the Books which *Enoch* left to Posterity, mention'd in the Epistle of *St. Jude*: And for the confirming of this Opinion, he sets down these words of

Aug. lib. 15  
de Civit.  
Dei, c. 23.

*St. Augustine*: *Scriptisſe quedam divina Enochum illum ſeptimum ab Adamo negare non poſſumus.* On the contrary, it is much more probable that *Enoch* never writ any Book, but that *St. Jude* quoted *Enoch's* words, according to the Tradition of that time which ascrib'd them to him, as *St. Paul* mentions also *Jannes* and *Jambres* according to the Tradition of the *Jews*. The *Jews* have many other such like Traditions, which they ascribe to their first Patriarchs, under whose Names their Allegorical and Cabbalistick Doctors have since publish'd Books full of Dreams. This however hinders not but there are many Truths in these Books which can be authoriz'd only by Tradition, and nothing but the Spirit of God can distinguish truth from what is false

Aug. lib. 18  
de Civit.  
Del, c. 38.

in these Works. Wherefore *St. Augustine* in another place speaks not so positively of this suppos'd Book of *Enoch*, but that he seems to suspect it; several Fathers themselves, as *St. Jerom* affirms, refus'd heretofore to receive the Epistle of *St. Jude* as Canonical, by reason of the Testimony of *Enoch*, which is there related: *Et quia de libro Enoch, ſays St. Jerom, in speaking of St. Jude and his Epistle, qui Apocryphus est, in ea assumis testimonium, à plerisque rejicitur.* *Walton* therefore has not always in his Collection chose what was most probable, but what seem'd most to agree with the Matter he treated of. And thus he commends these words of *Gretſer*, for the authorizing the Antiquity of the first Letters: *Nec annorum series exquisitè ad tunc secula observari, neq; Enochi verba retineri absq; literarum adminiculo potuisse videntur.* This *Walton* says is a strong Argument that the first Characters were before the Flood: *Quæ, ſays he, ratio mihi efficax videtur.* But I am of a contrary opinion, and that it is a manifest Cheat. There are several other things in this 2d. Discourse; but for fear of being

Hieron de  
Scriptor.  
Eccles.

being tedious, I shall pass to the 3d. where the Hebrew Tongue, with its Antiquity and Alterations, is particularly spoken of.

I shall not here stay to examine all the Reasons which *Walton* has given in his 3d. Discourse, to show that the Hebrew Tongue was so call'd from a word which signifies, *On the other side*, that is to say, *On the other side of Euphrates*, and not from the word *Heber*, whence *Hebri* has been since made, that is to say, *Hebrew*. I shall not, I say, stay here to examine all these Reasons, although there are very few which are probable, because I have elsewhere prov'd, that this last Etymology is much more probable than the former: I shall only observe, that the Reasons which *Walton* makes use of to prove the Antiquity of the Hebrew Tongue, are of no force, and may as well be appli'd to the Chaldee, Arabick and Syriack. For example: The first Proof which he draws from the Etymologies, has as much relation to these last Tongues as to the Hebrew; besides, that there is more of Fancy than Truth in what he relates out of *Postel*, *Bochartus*, and some other Authors, concerning this affinity of words, which they affirm is in most Tongues with the Hebrew. What is most certain as to this Affair is, that Latin comes from Greek, and that Greek comes from Chaldee or Syriack; and as this last Tongue differs very little from Hebrew, we ought not to wonder that there are some Hebrew, or rather Chaldee words in most of the Tongues of Europe, where Latin has spread it self. Which thing proves not that Hebrew is the ancientest Tongue, but that all Tongues proceed originally from Chaldee, which is almost the same with Hebrew.

The 2d. Proof which is drawn from the Simplicity of the Hebrew Tongue, is not altogether convincing, as I have shown in Chap. 14. and 15. of the first Book of this Criticism, where there are several Reasons which may make us doubt, whether Hebrew was the first Tongue of the World or no; where I have also at the same time shown, how this first Tongue was naturally invented without any divine assistance. Neither is it true, as *Walton* affirms, that all the Fathers are of this opinion, excepting *Theodore*, since *St. Gregory of Nyssa* had long before oppos'd it. *Theodore* has treated at large upon this Question, and at the same time added, that men who had studied the holy Scriptures, were not of opinion that Hebrew was the first Tongue of the World, and that which *Adam* and *Eve* spoke in the terrestrial Paradise. To conclude: What *Walton* in the same place says concerning the *Phœnicians* and *Canaanites* Tongue, which differ'd very little from the Hebrew, agrees with all ancient History.

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Greg. Nyss.  
cont. Ee-  
nom. Orat.  
12.

Proleg. 3.  
Crit. Book  
1. Ch. 14.

There is only this difference betwixt one and the other, that it was call'd *Hebrew* by those who descended from *Heber*, and *Phœnician* by the *Phœnicians*, whom we ought rather to look upon as the persons who communicated this Tongue to other Nations with whom they traded, than the *Hebrews*; and yet the *Jews*, according to their wonted vanity, ascribe several things to themselves, by reason of this nearness of Language, which belong only to the ancient *Phœnicians*.

I pass by some too nice Questions, which *Walton* with some Divines examines, who think that the Blessed will speak Hebrew in Heaven. We need not also stop at the excessive praises which he at the same place gives the Hebrew Tongue, because there is hardly any thing of truth in these extravagant commendations; and that instead of admiring this Tongue for its perfection, and other good qualities which *Walton* ascribes to it, I dare affirm that Hebrew, and all the other ancient Languages, which have any relation hereto, are very imperfect, as generally all things are at their first invention. *Walton* however, who admires the great perfections of the Hebrew Tongue, concludes with *Possevin*, in favour of this Tongue: *Tot esse in Hebraica Scriptura Sacramenta quot litera; tot mysteria quot puncta; tot arcana quot apices*: I confess I have not so discerning a judgement as this Jesuit, for the finding out of so many Mysteries. *Walton* to show farther the beauty of this Tongue, adds to *Possevin's* Authority that of *Luther's*, who says, in speaking of the sweetness and charms of the Hebrew Tongue: *Hebraeos Prophetas velle cogere ut Germanicè loquantur, (vel alia quavis lingua) perinde esse ac si Philomelam quis cogeret, ut dulcissima sua melodia relicta utrisonam cuculi vocem imitaretur*. *Luther* had need have a very good ear to distinguish this sort of melody; and he had reason to say as *Walton* in the same place reports, Although he understood but very indifferently Hebrew, he would not however lose that little knowledge he had for all the Treasures of the World: *Etsi exigua, says Luther, sit mea Linguae Hebraicae notitia, cum omnibus tamen totius mundi Gazis non commutarem*.

*Walton* to make the Excellency and Usefulness of this Tongue yet more appear, proves by *St. Augustine* that it is so rich and fruitful, that the same place may be interpreted several ways; and every way very well; whence he concludes that it was chosen by God, because it is as it were a fertile Sanctuary of all his holy Mysteries: *A Deo electa videtur hæc Lingua Mysteriorum divinarum Sacramentum quasi omnium fecundissimum*. And what is yet more wonderful is, that he at the same time affirms, that we may in two or three months learn this Tongue

Luther  
Epist. ad  
Linæum.

Tongue well enough, which is one of the most fruitfulest Tongues of the whole World, and that we need spend but a years time to understand it throughly.

Thus *Walton* sometimes is mistaken in copying from bad Originals. He argues much better in the series of his Discourse, where he speaks of the first Hebrew Letters which are call'd *Samaritan*, and are the ancient *Phœnician* Characters. For the clearing of this difficulty, he sets down most of the Proofs which are usually alledg'd either of one side or of the other upon this Subject: Then he concludes, in favour of them who affirm with *Ludovicus Capellus* and *Father Morin*, according to *St. Jerom's* and the ancient *Jews* Opinions, that the Letters call'd *Samaritan*, which the *Samaritans* at present make use of, are the ancient and first Hebrew Characters. He has joyn'd with this Question another as famous a one amongst the Criticks, concerning the Antiquity of the Vowel Points in the Hebrew Text; and after having observ'd, that this last difficulty belongs not only to Grammar but also to Divinity, he declares, that he is more oblig'd to follow the truth, than the Opinion of several Protestants, who believe we cannot make the Points in the Hebrew Text to be of late invention, without destroying the holy Scriptures, and at the same time defending of the Catholics Opinions: *Non eget, says he, veritas mendacii patrocinio, nec neganda vel occulta est veritas; licet in malum finem aliqui ea abutantur*; whereby he shows, that he was not at all convinc'd by *Buxtorf's* Reasons against *Capellus*, to prove the Antiquity of Points. Wherefore he sets down at length the Proofs both of the one side and the other, and at the same time answers *Buxtorf's* Reasons, and those who follow his Opinion.

CHAP. XXII.

Criticism upon 4, 5, 6, and 7 Prolegomena's before the English Polyglotte.

**W**alton in his 4th. Discourse treats of the several Editions of the Bible : And first of all observes, that the first Originals of the holy Scriptures being wholly lost, and the Copies having been writ out by men who were liable to mistakes, divine Providence has however preserv'd these holy Scriptures, and hinder'd any thing from hapning to them which might obstruct our Faith. But all men agree not about this singular Providence of God, which *Walton* with the other *Protestants* lays down. It is true that he grounds it upon the Authority of the Church, whom God, he says, intrusts with his Oracles, and which is the true pillar of Faith. He affirms then, that this Church has always had pious and learned men, who have had the care of reviewing and correcting the faults which hap'ned to these divine Copies, through the faults of Transcribers. This he attributes chiefly to these last Ages, wherein the Church according to him has done all as possibly it could, for the preserving of this divine Pledge. But as these Revisors were not inspir'd by God for the reviewing of these Copies, and that besides they had not the Originals to compare them with, it is to be fear'd that they have not exactly corrected them; and instead of their being restor'd in these latter Ages, I am of opinion they are in some places less exact than they were heretofore. We need only read the History of the Hebrew Text, which I have given in the two first Books of this Work to be wholly convinc'd hereof. When *St. Paul* said that the Church was the pillar and ground of Truth, he understood not thereby the Grammarians or Criticks, who have corrected the Copies of the Bible, but he meant that we ought not to search for the truth of Religion but in the Church, who alone is possess'd of the Scripture, because she possesses the true sence thereof. Wherefore although there were no Copies of the Bible in the World, Religion would be preserv'd, because the Church would always subsist. This is the Fathers Opinion upon this

Proleg. 4.

Epist. 1. ad Tim. 3. 15.

this Point, which *Walton* seems to deviate from, to agree better with the Principle of the *Protestants*, who allow of no Tradition of the Church. We ought however to do him this justice, that he has in several places acknowledg'd it, as the Fathers of the Council of *Trent* have establish'd it.

After having spoke of the Copies of the Bible in general, he speaks of the several Editions in particular; the first of which he ascribes to *Esdra*s, and the great Assembly held in his time, over which he presid. But as has already been observ'd, we have nothing for certain concerning this great Synagogue or Assembly, so famous amongst the *Jews*. On the contrary, they have said so many things which are not at all probable, that we have reason to doubt of every thing. It is however very probable, that the *Jews* at their return from *Babylon*, collected what they could find of their holy Copies, and that *Esdra*s, who in the Scripture is call'd the Scribe, undertook this charge. But this Collection was not the last of the Canonical Books, as we at present have them, because there are in this Collection some Books in Hebrew which were writ after *Esdra*s's time.

As for what *Walton* in the same place says, That the Church has not the power of making new Canonical Books, or of declaring any to be so, unless it has understood by a constant Tradition, that they were writ by men inspir'd by God, that may be explain'd in a good sence, and be also true; but the application he makes thereof to the Books which the *Protestants* call *Apocryphal*, and which the *Catholicks* look upon as divine, is altogether false. *St. Jerom*, who in many places of his Works, when he speaks according to the opinion of the *Jews*, seems to deny that these Books are of the same divine Authority, as those contain'd within the *Jewish* Canon, gives however the Church the power of placing the Book of *Judith* amongst the holy Scriptures. *Hunc Librum*, says he, in speaking of the Book of *Judith*, *Synodus Nicana in numero sanctarum Scripturarum legitur computasse*. It is true that *Josephus* allows not those Books which were writ since *Artaxerxes*, to be of the same Authority as those which were writ before that time, and the Reason he gives is, because there has not been the same succession of Prophets as before. But as we have elsewhere observ'd, there were as long as the *Jewish* Commonwealth subsisted, from time to time persons amongst them inspir'd by God, although in the latter Ages they were not call'd *Prophets*.

We need not mention the other Editions of the Bible, which *Walton* has inserted into his Catalogue, because I have spoken at large in

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*Hieron*  
*Præf. in*  
*Lib. Jud.*

*Joseph. l. 1.*  
*cont. App.*



the first Book of this Work, of the several Hebrew Manuscript Copies, where we may correct what *Walton* has not exactly set down; and besides I shall treat hereof more largely in the last Chapter of this Book. Let us now go to *Walton's* 5<sup>th</sup> Discourse, where he speaks of the different Translations of the Bible in general.

Proleg. 5.

As he has spoken particularly of most of the Translations, which he in this Discourse speaks of in general, we need not spend much time hereupon. Wherefore I shall only observe, that *Walton* here affirms many things which are not wholly certain: As when he speaks of the *Armenian* Translation by *St. Chrysostom*; of the Translation into the *Dalmatick* Tongue by *St. Jerom*; of the Translation into *Sclavonick* by *Cyril* or *Methodius*; of the Translation into *French* by *Charles V.* all this is very uncertain, and most of it false. For the *Armenians*, for example, deny that *St. Chrysostom* made the *Armenian* Translation, which some make him to be the Author of; they only say there was one made in his time. There is nothing in *St. Jerom's* Epistle to *Sophronius*, of this Father's having translated the Scripture into the *Dalmatick* Tongue, as *Walton* affirms; but *St. Jerom* there only says, that he has corrected the ancient Septuagint Translation, to give it to them who spoke his Tongue, to wit, the *Latins*, as we may easily find by reading of this Epistle, and not the *Dalmatians*: *Quorum Septuaginta*, says he, *Translationem diligentissime emendatam, olim meæ Linguae hominibus dederim.* *Charles V.* also was never supposed to have made a *French* Translation of the Scripture, although there was one translated out of *Latin* into *French* in his time. What is most remarkable in this 5<sup>th</sup> Discourse of *Walton's* is, that he leaves the Interpretation of the Scripture to the Church; this he however does very obscurely, supposing that the sense of the Scripture depends upon the ancient Translations which were authoriz'd by the Church. *Versionum antiquarum & quæ auctoritatem in Ecclesia pura & primæva obtinebant collatio ad verum Scripturæ sensum in dubiis & obscuris eliciendum multum lucis afferre; nemo negaverit, qui anima perpenderit, Verbum Dei non in literis sive impressis, sed in vero sensu verborum proprie consistere, quem nemo melius explicare potest, quam Ecclesia vera, cui sanctum hoc depositum Christus commisit, quæ per versiones varias genuinum ejus sensum quasi per manus traditum ab Apostolis, & ab Ecclesiarum Rectoribus acceptum fideliter posteris transmittit.* These are the words which seem to favour the Tradition, which the Fathers of the Council have in a manner made equal to the word contain'd in the holy Scripture.

Hieron  
Sophr. Ep.  
134.

Proleg. 5.  
pag. 34.  
cap. 2.

Wal-

*Walton* in his 6<sup>th</sup> Discourse, where he examines whether there are any various Readings in the Hebrew Text of the Scripture, as well as in other Books, lays down at the beginning this Maxim, That no one can deny but that there are various Readings both in the Old and New Testament. *Dari Lectiones variantes in ipso Hebræo Textu Veteris & Novi Testamenti à nemine negari potest, cum hoc testentur tot varietates ex Codicibus Manuscriptis & impressis à viris doctis annotata.* This he proves by the testimony of the most learned and judicious Protestants, who are of the same opinion. Then he adds, That he has set down the testimony of these learned men, to satisfy some scrupulous persons, who imagine that we cannot admit of various Readings in the Scripture, without ruining of the Principle of Religion. He forestalls even the Objections which might be made against him upon this account, as if it was more proper wholly to conceal these various Readings, which may scandalize weak persons. And lastly, He concludes that this Scruple is ill grounded, and that the collecting of the various Readings is useful: *Vanum esse istorum metum & utilitates non spernandas habere variarum Lectionum collectionem.*

He at the same time lays down some general Rules for the reconciling of the various Readings; and amongst others, he prefers the most ancient Copies before the modern ones, because according to him they come nigher the Original: This however is not altogether true in the Hebrew Copies of the Bible, as may be seen in the first Part of this Work, where this Matter is more largely discuss'd. To conclude: *Walton* herein wholly agrees with the Opinion of the *Catholic* Church, when he affirms, that we ought not easily to change the ancient Reading, but to submit our selves to the Judgement of the Church, who does not always correct what might be corrected: *Ecclesiæ judicium expectandum, quæ non super omnia quæ correctione egere videntur, corrigit.* As *Walton* copi'd out of *Catholic* Authors Books, as well as Protestants, he sometimes wholly agrees with the former, whose very words he sets down: He had seen the Disorders the Innovators of his time had made in *England*, who despis'd both the Church and Tradition; wherefore he deviates as much as he can from their Opinions, and comes nigher the *Catholic*s. This we may easily observe throughout his whole Discourse: *Ludovicus Capellus* however is his chief Author, yet every one knows that *Ludovicus Capellus's* Criticism favours not the Protestants.

He in his 7<sup>th</sup> Discourse shows the Authority and Integrity of the Hebrew Text, which he prefers before all Translations, and at the same

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Proleg. 7.

same time proves, that the *Jews* have never designedly corrupted their Copies. Although this Opinion is true, he however defends it by certain Reasons which are not convincing; as when he has recourse to the divine Providence of God, who would not according to him suffer the holy Scriptures to be corrupted. This however is not the Opinion of most of the Fathers, who have affirm'd that the Old Testament has been corrupted by the *Jews*, and the New one by the *Hereticks*; they for all that acknowledged the Providence of God: Wherefore we ought to bring other Proofs, to show that the *Jews* have not corrupted their Copies, than those drawn from this divine Providence. Neither do I find the other Proof which he draws from the Authority of the Church, who keeps the holy Scriptures as a pledge, to be wholly convincing. The Church has continually preserv'd the Truths contain'd in the holy Scripture, but it has not for all that given the Spirit of Sincerity to Transcribers, who writ out the Copies of the Bible, and has not hinder'd them from altering of their Copies. I am also of opinion that the Copies corrupted by the *Hereticks*, cannot be corrected by those writ out by the *Catholicks*; it was impossible to make this distinction, especially in Manuscripts. Wherefore this preservation of the Bible in the Church, can relate only to the Bible in general, and not in particular: For this is certain, that there has not only several Alterations hapned to the Scripture, but that part of the Books have been lost, and that what we at present have, is only an Abridgement of more large and ancient Records, which the *Jews* heretofore had in their Registries. Some Fathers have been of opinion, that the *Jews* put only in this Collection what they thought fit, and they have not herein dealt sincerely: But however it is, this is at least certain, that most of the Fathers had not recourse to divine Providence, for the restoring the Originals of the Scripture.

In some places of this Discourse *Walton* is not very exact; as where he affirms, that *Buxtorf's* great Bible printed at *Basil* is more correct than the 2d. Edition thereof at *Venice*; which is not true; and he has judg'd hereof only by *Buxtorf's* testimony, who commended the new Edition which he publish'd: Those Authors who collect only what they have read out of others Books, usually commit these sort of Mistakes. It is also probable that he stretches *Tertullian's* Opinion too far, when he affirms that in his time there were Originals of the New Testament. *Tertullian* on the contrary in his Book of *Prescription*, seems to have observ'd a clear different method from this;

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for he grounds not the truth of Religion upon the Scripture, but rather the Scripture upon the truth of Religion, which had preserv'd it self in its purity in the Apostolical Churches. Most of the first *Heretick* Disputes were concerning the receiving or rejecting of some Books or Passages of the Scripture, which went so far, that instead of having true Originals of the New Testament in *Tertullian's* time, as *Walton* affirms, *St. Ignatius* says, that in his time some refus'd to receive the Evangelists, unless they could find faithful Copies thereof in the Registries of the Church; and this is without doubt the Reason why the Fathers consult not the Scripture, so much as the Doctrine receiv'd and approv'd of by the Churches founded by the Apostles. *Ubi enim*, says *Tertullian*, *apparuerit esse veritatem Disciplina & Fidei Christiana, illic erit veritas Scripturarum*. This Religion establish'd by the Apostles in the first Churches, is according to *Tertullian* the true Rule of Faith, and it was, before there was any Scripture of the New Testament. Wherefore we ought not to trouble our selves, whether we have any very correct ancient Originals of the Scripture or no, since Religion depends not wholly upon the Scriptures.

What Proofs can *Walton* bring to show, that the first Originals of the Bible have not been corrupted in Matters of Faith, unless he first knows what really belongs to Faith, and consequently without there be a Rule precedent to the Scripture, and independent from it? We may then regulate the Difficulties which may arise out of the holy Scriptures, by this ancient Rule which was before the Scriptures, and not wholly by those original Texts of the Bible which we at present have. In a word: If it be true, as *Walton* affirms, that we ought, by these Originals, as we at present have them, to regulate not only the Difficulties of Religion, but even all the Translations, what Rule can there be for the present Disputes betwixt the *Protestants* and *Socinians*, concerning a great many places of Scripture, even in Matters of Importance? Without they receive this first Rule, they can have no other but Reason and Criticism; and then their Religion cannot be divine, since it is grounded only upon humane Reasons. We ought therefore to lay some restraint upon this Proposition of *Walton's*: *Textus Hebraicos Veteris & Gracos Novi Testamenti semper fuisse & adhuc esse authenticos, ad quos omnes de Fide & Religione controversie, omnesq; versiones probari & examinari debent*. He spoke then as a *Protestant*, and in other places where he establishes Tradition, he speaks as a *Catholick*.

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*Tertul. de  
Prescript.  
advers. He-  
ret.*

*Ignat. Ep  
advers.  
Philad.*

*Tertul. de  
Prescript.  
advers. He-  
ret. c. 19.*

P. 42. Coll.

Besides: This other Argument of *Walton's* in the same place, That our Saviour and his Apostles would not have quoted the Old Testament for the confirming of their Doctrine, if the Copies of those Times had not agreed with the first Originals, seems not to me to be wholly convincing. The Apostles quoted the Books of Scripture as they then were, and whether they were corrupted or no, their Quotations work'd no alteration therein; and therefore we ought to search for other Proofs than this, to show that the Copies of the Bible in our Saviour's time agreed with the ancient Originals. We ought not to argue about the Scripture, as about most other Acts which we are not oblig'd to believe, without they agree exactly with their Original. But the Scripture, whether it be corrupted or not, may be quoted as an authentick Act, when it is prescrib'd within the limits we have already allow'd it, that is to say, when it agrees with the Doctrine of the Church; and in this sense it is that the Fathers said, that the true and pure Scripture is only to be found in the Church, and that it alone is possess'd thereof. As the ancient Hereticks had corrupted the Text of the New Testament, and that it was impossible wholly to restore it without the first Originals, the first Fathers had all of them recourse to the Copies which had been preserv'd in the Church, because they could not be suspected to have been corrupted, although it's possible they may have been corrupted. Thus the Providence of God has preserv'd the Scripture in the Church, by preserving therein the purity of Doctrine, and not by hindring the Copies of the Bible from being corrupted.

Proleg. 43.  
Coll. 1. *Walton* however thinks we do the Church injury, in saying she has suffer'd these Copies to have been corrupted, as if God had been oblig'd to work Miracles for the preserving of them whole. But for as much as our Faith may subsist without them, there was no necessity for God to preserve the first Originals of the Bible entire, since he has left the true Doctrine to the Church, by which we ought to regulate the Books of the Scripture. *Walton* is according to his own principle oblig'd to have recourse to this Rule, and to confess that there are no true Originals of the Scripture at present without fault, and that it is impossible to find any. He moreover adds, that God might indeed have hindred the Transcribers from falling into Errors, in the writing out of their Copies, but that this was not necessary. *Potuit quidem Deus omnes Scribas ab errore omni immunes prestare: hoc vero Dei sapientiae haud congruum videbatur, qui laborem & diligentiam nostram in servandis & corrigendis Codicibus adhibendam voluit; unde & aliquando*

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*labi permisit, sed non in gravioribus, nec ita ut media deessent quibus lapsus isti corrigi possent.* But how could *Walton* justify that the faults in the Copies of the Bible are of no importance as to Religion, since he has not the first Originals to justify them by? If he alledges only those Rules which he may draw from Criticism, Religion then is grounded only upon Reason; and therefore it is not absolutely true, that the present Originals ought to regulate all the Disputes in Religion, unless we thereto add the other Rule we have before mention'd, which makes Religion not to depend upon the Originals of the Scripture: *Quid si, says St Irenaeus, neq; Apostoli Scripturas reliquissent nobis, nonne oportebat ordinem sequi traditionis quam tradiderunt his quibus committebant Ecclesiam?* *Iren. l. 3. c. 4.*

## C H A P. XXIII.

## A Criticism upon the 8 and 9 Prolegomena's before the English Polyglott.

IN the 8<sup>th</sup> Discourse, *Walton* has made a pretty exact Collection of all things belonging to the ancient Criticism of the Hebrew Text, which is usually call'd the *Massoret*; as I have elsewhere largely treated hereof, and have observ'd what may be useful in this Affair: I need not now spend much time hereupon. I shall only observe, that *Walton* has set down many Niceties which he had found in *Buxtorf's* Books: And he seems not thoroughly to have understood this Matter: as when he says, that the *Arabians* have herein imitated the *Jews*, who after their example have mark'd the *Vowel Points*, the various Readings, and the Verses of their Alphabet: It is on the contrary much more probable that the *Jews* have follow'd the *Arabians*, and that the *Arabians* have follow'd the *Greeks* and other Nations. The *Jews*, as I have already shown in the 1<sup>st</sup> Part of this Work, are beholden to the *Arabians* for their Grammars, and not the *Arabians* to the *Jews*, as *Walton* has affirm'd.

There is also hardly any probability in what he says concerning the time when the *Massoret* begun, to wit, about the time of the *Maccabees*, when the Sect of the *Pharisees* sprung up amongst the *Jews*: The

The *Pharisees* on the contrary wholly applying themselves to the maintaining the Traditions of their Fathers, and searching after only the Allegorical sense of the Scripture, could not methinks be the Authors of a Criticism upon the Text of the Bible. *Walton* however affirms, they began then to follow exactly the Letter of their Text, without troubling themselves about the true sense: *Tunc enim inceperunt esse valde studiosi circa legis corticem, verum ejus sensum & observationem parum curantes.* But we ought rather to say, that they neglected both the Text and the sense thereof; it is not usual for Preachers, as the *Pharisees* were, to study the Criticism of the Bible, and to apply themselves to the correcting of their Copies.

Although *Walton* has collected what concerns the *Massoret* out of *Buxtorf's* Books, he has not however follow'd his Opinion concerning the usefulness of the *Massoret*; he has prefer'd the Opinion of *Capellus* and Father *Morin*, and therefore he with these two Authors largely treats of the frivolous Niceties of the *Massoret*: We may however say, that neither *Capellus* nor Father *Morin* understood the ancient way of putting the number of the Verses at the end of the Books. We ought not to blame the *Jews*, for being the first who invented these sort of Niceties, which were at that time in some sort useful. Every Writer at the end of his Book set down the number of Verses therein contain'd, that Transcribers might add nothing in the writing of it out, because by the number of Verses we understood how many words there were; and thus nothing could be added to a Book but would be easily perceiv'd. But the *Jews* have for particular Reasons, as has already been observ'd, chang'd the nature of the Verses; the Lines were with them instead of the ancient Verses, which at first were only Lines; and as each Line contain'd so many words, it was easie thereby to know how many words were in a Book.

The *Jews*, who understood not these Beginnings, have invented many pleasant Stories upon this account, and there have been many *Christians* who have too easily believ'd them. Wherefore *Walton* had reason to reject the Opinion of those who have too rashly credited what they had read in the *Rabbins* Books; but he could not ascend to the source of all, nor correct the Opinion of the *Jews*, because the Authors he copi'd from had contented themselves barely with opposing the *Massoret*, without particularly examining what might have occasion'd the *Massoret* amongst the *Jews*. This has occasion'd many frivolous things to have been said both of one side and the other, because, as I have already largely shown, men have been ignorant of the first grounds of this *Massoret*, and consequently of its true use. As

As for the various Readings which the *Jews* call *Keri* and *Cetib*, *Walton* gives the Catalogue thereof, which *Capellus* had collected in his Criticism; but he would have done better to have lessen'd the number hereof, than with *Capellus* to have augmented them. It is true, that by comparing several Manuscripts with the best Editions of the Bible, we find not that there is any stated number; but on the other side if we follow the exact Rules of Criticism, we shall not multiply the various Readings of a Book, by reason of Transcribers faults which may be found in different Copies. This however is *Capellus* and *Walton's* method, whereas I in the 1st. Book of this Criticism have lessen'd the number of *Keri's* and *Cetibs*, by consulting of good Manuscripts of the Bible, wherein I have found fewer than in the printed ones. We ought to follow this same method as well in correcting the Hebrew Bibles, as in correcting all other Books, whereas that has been call'd a various Reading, which was a manifest Error of the Transcriber. But because the *Jews*, who look upon all things as mysterious, have taken these *Keri's* and *Cetibs* to be so, they have carefully preserv'd the number of these Varieties, as if God was the Author of them. *Capellus* and *Walton*, who were of opinion that there was no mystery herein, ought not methinks to have counted them so exactly, because they who understand not Hebrew, think they are so many various Readings, whereas most of these Varieties consist only in Niceties, which proceed only from Transcribers, who have been mistaken. Wherefore we ought not to wonder at the many various Readings, which *Walton* makes to amount to 1171. this being also *Capellus's* Account; but we ought to examine those which are real Varieties, and preserve them in the Margin of the Text, rejecting those which are manifest Errors of Transcribers, and then the number of *Keri's* and *Cetibs*, or various Readings, will be much less than in the Catalogues of *Capellus* and *Walton*.

We may apply this same Observation to the various Readings, whereof the *Jews* have given us the Catalogues of *Ben-Asher* and *Ben-Nephtali*, which they call *Eastern* and *Western*. Most of these Varieties consist only in Niceties of no moment, because when the *Jewish* Doctors made their Critical Observations upon the Text of the Bible, their Copies agreed one with the other, and therefore they could take notice of no Varieties of importance: Whereto we may add, that the Manuscript Catalogues of these various Readings differ most of them one from another; *Walton* observes that *Felix Pratensis* was the first who printed them, without saying where he had them.

Wherefore it is fit we should understand that the *Jews* were us'd to put these sort of Catalogues, at the beginning or the end of their Manuscript Copies, with several other Critical Observations concerning the *Massoret*.

I know not why *Walton* speaks here of the *Jewish Cabbale*, by reason of the *Massoret*, pretending that these words both of them signify *Tradition*, and that, as he observes, the same Science amongst the *Jews* is indifferently call'd *Cabbale* or *Massoret*: *Eadem Scientia apud Judeos tam Cabbala quam Massora dicitur*. These two things however differ much one from the other, although they agree in Name; for the *Massoret* is only a Criticism upon the Hebrew Text, whereas the *Cabbale* relates only to the Explanations of the Law, as God gave them to *Moses* upon the Mount *Sinai* according to the *Jews*, and some ridiculous Traditions which they say come from this Mountain, although they differ from those comprehended in the *Massoret*. Wherefore *Walton* might have left out what in this place he says concerning the *Cabbale*, and its different Species's, because it has no relation either to the Text of the Bible, or to the Translations, and is of no use at all in the Criticism of the Hebrew Text, which he treats of throughout this whole Discourse, where the business is not about giving Rules for the explaining of the Scripture-Text, but the various Readings only of this Text.

*Walton* after having spoke of the Hebrew Text of the Bible, falls afterwards upon the Translations; and first of all examines the ancient Greek Septuagint Translation, which he highly commends, and leaves out nothing which may be said in its advantage, only he is not of opinion that it was inspir'd by God, because that would not agree with his System, which is to prefer the Original Hebrew before all the Translations which are only humane. He sets up the Authority of this ancient Greek Translation by the Book of *Aristæus*, whom he calls a faithful Historian: *Historicus fide dignus, & omni exceptione major*. He adds to *Aristæus*, *Aristobulus*, a Jew by birth, and Peripatetick Philosopher, *Josephus*, *Philon*, the ancient Jewish Doctors of the *Talmud*, and most of the *Rabbins*: But, as has already been observ'd, *Aristæus*'s Book was feign'd by the ancient Hellenist *Jews*, which no one can read without perceiving of evident Marks of its being feign'd. The Books of *Aristobulus*, and some other ancient Authors, who have writ so much in favour of the *Jews*, have been also feign'd; whereto we may add, that *Walton* here confounds this *Aristobulus* with another *Aristobulus*, spoke of in the 2<sup>d</sup> Book of the *Maccabees*.

As

As for *Josephus* and *Philon*, they have said nothing but upon the testimony of this false *Aristobulus*; and we may say that these Authors are very little exact, in what concerns the Glory of the Jewish Nation, and especially *Josephus*, who has search'd for Proofs of the Antiquity of his Nation in all Authors, without having throughly examin'd them. As for the Doctors of the *Talmud* and the *Rabbins*, they are divided upon this account, besides that in the *Talmud* the Septuagint Translation is differently spoke of in different places. Every one moreover knows, that several *Jews* at the beginning of Christianity rejected this Translation, as not being exact; and therefore we ought not to rely upon their testimony in an Affair of this importance. Lastly, *Walton* would have much ado to produce those many *Rabbins*, which according to him have writ the History of the Septuagint, after the same way as it is in *Aristæus*'s Book.

As for *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and other Fathers, which *Walton* alledges as unquestionable Witnesses of this History, they have only copi'd from *Aristæus*'s Book, adding thereto several things which are not at all probable. As the Fathers had in the beginning no other Scripture but this ancient Greek Translation, they have commended it as much as possibly they could, without considering whether what they said was true or no; wherein they seem'd to have more ground for what they said, for as much as *Josephus* and *Philon*, who being *Jews* could not be suspected, agreed herein with them. Lastly, The Fathers were back'd by the Example of the Apostles and primitive Teachers, who made use of this same Septuagint Translation. But all these Reasons, as I have elsewhere shown, do not infallibly prove the truth of the History of the Septuagint, as it is in *Aristæus*. If Hebrew had been as well understood throughout the Empire as Greek then was, the Apostles and primitive Teachers would without doubt have prefer'd the Hebrew Text of the Bible, before the ancient Greek Septuagint Translation. If we would then speak exactly upon this Business, we must go to the very Rise of all, and first examine the Reasons which caus'd both the ancient *Jews* and the first Fathers, to commend so highly this ancient Greek Translation.

To proceed: Although I give no credit to what is related by *Aristæus*, concerning the Septuagint Translation, I have for all that justifi'd it against some modern *Hebraicians*, who have very improperly accus'd the ancient Interpreters, as if they understood Hebrew but very indifferently: I have shown that St. *Jerom* had not always Reason, when he deviated from them. *Walton*, who has so much com-



mended this ancient Translation, was not of opinion that the LXXII Interpreters were inspir'd by God; and he for this relies upon the History of the same *Aristeus*, who has observ'd that these Interpreters consulted together to find out the best Translation, whence he concludes that they were not Prophets. But *Philon* has however acknowledg'd them to be Prophets, although he was perswaded that they had had long Consultations together, to agree upon the true Translation of some difficult words. Besides, the Apostles have been directed by the Spirit of God in all their Decisions, when they were met together, and yet they have consulted together upon the Difficulties which hapned. The same *Walton* adds, there had been no need for so many Interpreters, nor for their thoroughly understanding Hebrew, if the Authors of this Translation had been Prophets: But I find not that the number of Interpreters, or the understanding of Hebrew, has any thing contrary to Prophecie; and therefore *Walton* had no reason here to quit the Opinion of the Fathers, upon whom he rely'd for the authorizing the History of *Aristeus*, if he had not design'd to prefer the Original Hebrew before all the Translations. *Walton* also seems not to have seriously enough consider'd *Aristobulus's* Work, when he proves by the testimony of this Author, the truth of the History of the LXXII Interpreters; and a little afterwards he affirms, there was no other Greek Translation of the Law of *Moses* before the Septuagint, although *Aristobulus* has in his Work affirm'd the contrary.

As for the number of the Books of the Bible which were translated into Greek by the Septuagint, *Walton* had no reason to say, that we ought not herein to set any great value upon St. *Jerom's* Authority, who seems to be of a contrary Opinion to him upon this Point. On the contrary, St. *Jerom* ought to be preferr'd before all the other Fathers, because he has more examin'd this Matter than they. We plainly see throughout all his Works, that when he ascribes the Translation of all the Old Testament to the LXX Elders, he suits himself to the common Opinion of that Time; but when he will freely speak his mind, he follows the Opinion of *Josephus*, and the *Jews* of his Time, who affirm'd that *Ptolomy* had caus'd only the five Books of *Moses* to be translated into Greek. *Walton* in this same place sets down many other things which seem not to be exact, and which have no other ground but the prejudice he had for the Septuagint. No one, for example, doubts, but that under the Name of *Law*, are very often comprehended all the Books of the Old Testament; but the Question

is, how we ought to explain the ancient Authors, when they say that the LXXII Elders translated the Law: It is certain that they meant only the five Books of *Moses*; and therefore all which *Walton* says upon this account, and has taken out of Father *Morin's* Books, is not convincing.

He indeed confesses, that *Josephus* was of opinion, that the Septuagint had translated only the Law of *Moses* into Greek; but he at the same time opposes *Josephus* with *Aristobulus*: Sic *Josephus*, says he, *Judæo, Judæum ipso antiquiorem Aristobulum opponimus, virum doctum, Philosophum insignem, & Hieronymo tam ipsum Hieronymum loci; aliis, tam universam Ecclesiam Græcam & Latinam.* Whereby *Walton* plainly shows, that he had no other design but to authorize as much as possibly he could, all the Translations he produced, without thoroughly examining of them: And thus he thought it was necessary to ascribe the whole Greek Translation of the Old Testament to the Septuagint, without considering that *Aristobulus* is a feign'd Author, and that he has not follow'd him himself, in what he relates concerning an ancient Greek Translation of the Law before the Septuagint. Besides, what necessity is there to make use of the Authority of the Greek and Latin Church, in a Matter belonging purely to Criticism and not to Religion? If the number of Authors sways more with *Walton*, than Reason, he ought to give credit to the Cells of the LXX, which are authoriz'd by the most ancient Fathers, excepting St. *Jerom*, who rejects them as a Story invented by the *Hellenist Jews*: He ought also to believe what the ancient Fathers have said in their Works concerning the *Sybil's*. In a word: He is not judicious in making use of the Authority of the Greek and Latin Church, in a Matter belonging purely to Criticism, because it may be that in Affairs of this nature, the Authority only of one Father, who may have diligently examin'd them, ought to be preferr'd before the Opinion of all the others.

I shall not stay here to examine the false Consequences in *Walton's* Discourse, for having too easily credited what is related in the History of the false *Aristeus*, concerning the Septuagint Translation. I shall only add, that it is not altogether certain that the Septuagint Translation was publicly read in the Synagogues, instead of the Original Hebrew, and, instead of its being authoriz'd in the *Talmud*, as *Walton* seems to affirm, there are Laws in the *Talmud* which expressly forbid it. Thus this ancient Septuagint Translation was certainly read in the Synagogues where Greek was spoke, as an Explanation

nation of the Hebrew Text, just as in the Places where Chaldee was spoke, the Hebrew Text was explain'd in Chaldee, that the People might understand what they read. If *Walton* had seriously consider'd the *Novelle* of *Justinian*, which he in the same place quotes, with *Croisus's* Observation thereon, he perhaps would have been of another Opinion: For it is certain that in *Justinian's* Time, the *Jews* read the Septuagint Translation in their Synagogues or Schools, as an Interpretation only of the Original Hebrew, which they have continually read to fulfil the Commandment of the Law, although it was understood but by very few People.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*A Criticism upon the 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 Prolegomena's before the English Polyglott.*

ProL 10. **I**N his 10<sup>th</sup> Discourse *Walton* commends the two ancient Latin Editions of the Bible, which have been authoriz'd by the *Romish* Church; and at the same time he calls this the first Church of the World, commending it for having always exactly observ'd the ancient Traditions: *Ecclesia Romana quæ principem inter Ecclesias locum semper tenuit, & antiquarum Traditionum tenacissima fuit.* This ancient Latin Edition which had been made from the Septuagint, and had for a long time been us'd in the Western Church, was not however without faults, and the Interpreter does not always seem to have understood the Greek of the Septuagint, which is a Synagogue Greek, which few persons understood. It is true that this Translation is valuable, by reason of its being us'd for several Centuries by the chief Church of the World; but it was not for all that more exact, or agreed better with its Original. The Church, who preserves within it self the truth of Religion, regulates the Translations of the Bible by this truth, and not by the exactness of some Interpreter who may be mistaken: Wherefore she has often neglected to correct the faults of these same Translations, which for all that were authentick, although they agreed not exactly with the Originals. This *Walton* understood not, when he so freely affirm'd that this ancient Edition, which

which was us'd by the Latin Church for the first Centuries, was not really authentick, because it had been made from the Greek Septuagint, which according to him was not authentick, and that the Church of *Rome* would not have rejected it, and put another in its stead, had it been authentick.

But there is no necessity for a Translation to be authentick, to have all the qualities which *Walton* requires, nor that it should be inspir'd by God, as I have by several Reasons shown in the 2<sup>d</sup> Book of this Criticism, where I have explain'd how not only the Original of the Bible, but also the Translations, may be all authentick every one in its way. It is also not true that the Church has rejected this ancient Latin Translation; it has only prefer'd St. *Jerom's* new one before the ancient one, because it was clearer and less intricate; and thus we ought to say that both the ancient and new one are equally authentick, although they have each of them their faults.

As for the present Vulgar which is usually ascrib'd to St. *Jerom*, at least most part of it, *Walton* praises it in praising St. *Jerom*, whom he commends for his great Understanding both in the Hebrew and Chaldee Tongues; and he at the same time observes, that the *Jews* approv'd of this Translation, as agreeing with the Hebrew Text. But he is mistaken, by giving the Testimony of some modern *Rabbins*, who only mention this Translation by chance, without having read it; whereas he ought to have produc'd the Authority of the *Jews*, who liv'd in St. *Jerom's* Time, and not of *R. Asarius*, *R. David Kimbi*, and *Aben Ezra*.

No one can deny but the present Vulgar has many things of the ancient Vulgar, and that in some places there are two Translations mix'd together, and sometimes the *Theodotion* also. But on the other side, I do not believe that we can certainly prove the Vulgar not to be St. *Jerom's*, in all the places where he corrects the ancient Vulgar, whether in his Observations and Commentaries upon the Scripture, or in his Epistles, as *Walton* seems to have thought, with several other Authors, who affirm that the present Latin Translation is not St. *Jerom's*, because it follows not St. *Jerom's* own Corrections. For example: In his Hebrew Questions upon *Genesis*, and in his Commentaries upon the Prophets, he corrects many places of the ancient Vulgar, which are not corrected in the present one: And yet we cannot from thence infer, that St. *Jerom* is not the Author of the Vulgar in all those places, because he has in his new Translation let alone several places of the ancient one, which he thought not fit to correct,

for

for fear of deviating from the Translation receiv'd in the Church : Prox. in Ecclesiast. *De Hebraeo transferens*, says he, *magis me Septuaginta Interpretum consuetudini coaptavi*. He sometimes in his Commentaries corrects his new Translation from the Hebrew, as if it was not altogether exact, or rather St. *Jerom* has not been uniform in his way of translating, by reason of the uncertainty of the Hebrew Tongue. And therefore we ought not wholly to judge of the present Vulgar by his Commentaries and Treatises, otherwise we may also say that his Commentaries are not his, because in other places he sometimes deviates from thence. And besides we should be oblig'd to approve of several faults of Translation, which are in these same Commentaries or Observations : So that the present Vulgar is often more exact than St. *Jerom's* new Reformation, as may easily be prov'd, by comparing his Questions upon *Genesis* with the Vulgar. St. *Jerom* in his Questions upon *Genesis*, has follow'd as much as possibly he could the Opinion of the *Jews* of his Time, whereas, in the making of his new Translation of *Genesis*, he deviated as little as possibly he could from the ancient Vulgar, and other Translations in the *Hexaplasses* of *Origen*. This we ought in general to observe, if we will judge aright of the present Vulgar, which hinders not however but that in many places this Translation is compos'd partly of the ancient one, and partly of St. *Jerom's* new one, because the ancient one has been quitted, and the new one receiv'd but by little and little : And thus it was impossible but that something of the ancient one should be still kept in.

To proceed : *Walton* understood not what was meant by the word *authentick*, where the Vulgar is said to be authentick ; for we pretend not to exempt it from all faults, nor to make it of equal Authority with the first Originals. Besides, he has not thoroughly examin'd the Authors, which he has quoted to prove that there were a great many Errors in this Edition, before the Decree of the Council of *Trent* ; as when he alledges the Authority of *Isidorus Clarus*, who according to him affirms, that he had found 4000 faults in the Vulgar. Most of these pretended Errors of *Isidorus* are Chimerical, as may easily be prov'd by the Corrections in the Vulgar which he has publish'd. No one denies but that there are faults in the Vulgar, but that hinders not but it may be said to be authentick ; and therefore most of *Walton's* Arguments in this place, to show that it is not authentick, are of no moment : As when he with *Des Marets* says, that if it had been authentick, Pope *Clement* the VIII. would not have approv'd of *Cajetan's* new Translation of the *Psalms* ; and there had been no necessity for  
Pope

Pope *Leo* the X. to have engag'd *Pagnin* to have made a new Latin Translation of the whole Bible.

*Walton* however could not but understand what was the Opinion of the most learned Doctors of the Church of *Rome* in this Point, for he sets it down at large in the series of this Discourse ; and he concludes, that if the Vulgar was declar'd authentick after the manner as *Vega*, *James Lainez*, Superiour General of the *Jesuits*, *Serarius*, and several other learned Divines have affirm'd it to be, we cannot say that it is more authentick than the Translations of *Pagnin*, *Leon de Juda*, *Castalio*, and *Tremellius* : But herein he is mistaken, not having understood the meaning of the Council of *Trent*, who gave the Vulgar only this privilege by reason of its Antiquity. And therefore although it is in general true, as I have elsewhere shown, that every Translation of the Bible made by learned, and not suspected persons, is authentick, the Vulgar however has this advantage over all others, that it is the only one that has been declar'd authentick by a general Council. This however (according to the judicious Observation of Cardinal *Palavacini*) hinders not, but that a new Translation may be made both more exact, and to agree better with the Original Hebrew ; but it will not be of the same Authority in the Church, as that which has been approv'd of by the Church.

What has made *Walton* to mistake is, that he was of opinion, that there were only the Originals of any Act which were really authentick, without considering that the Translations of these Acts are also after their way authentick ; otherwise if we take the word *Authentick* in its proper signification for an Original, there is no Bible at present which is really authentick, because we have only faulty Copies of these first Originals, which may be corrected in many places by the ancient Translations. As for the modern Translations of the Scripture, we have reason to suspect them, especially those made by the *Protestants* since their Schism ; and this is the Reason why the Fathers of the Council of *Trent* wisely ordain'd, that of all the Latin Translations, the most ancient only should be publickly authoriz'd, because it was before all the Disputes, and therefore could not be suspected by any Party. They however rejected not the other Translations, nor the Originals, having no other design but to allay the Controversies which daily arose in the Church, by reason of the modern Translations of the Scripture, without thoroughly examining, according to the Rules of Criticism, whether this ancient Translation which they authoriz'd was altogether exact or no. They gave this

this liberty to persons learned both in the Tongues and Divinity, so they us'd in publick the ancient Latin Interpreter, and prefer'd him before all the modern Translators, whose Translations were not authoriz'd either by long use, or any Decree. Thus the Vulgar Translation was declar'd authentick by the Fathers of the Council of Trent; but for as much as *Walton* was possess'd with the usual Prejudices of the Protestants concerning the word *Authentick*, he denies that the Church can declare any Books of the Bible authentick, ascribing this power to God only; as if it was necessary for an authentick Translation to be in all points equal with its Original. *Versionem authenticam, says he, propriè loquendo facere non est in Ecclesiæ potestate; ut enim librum non Canonicum, non potest Canonicum facere; sed tantum testificari quosnam libros ipsa pro Canonicis habet, & à majoribus receperit, sic non potest Versionem authenticam vel cum Textu originali æqualem facere; hoc enim solius Dei qui divinam auctoritatem cuilibet scripto conferre potest.* This Argument of *Walton's* is a manifest Paralogism, because there is a great deal of difference betwixt being Canonical or Divine, and being Authentick. God only can give a divine Authority to any Act, whereas the Translation of an Act is an authentick Copy of this Act, when it appears to have been made by a skilful and unsuspected person; and thus every Translation of the Bible is in this sence authentick, and consequently divine, because it is the Copy of an Act which in it self is authentick and divine, unless the Translator has dealt treacherously. The Council of Trent thought fit to declare authentick, for the use of the Latin Church, only the Vulgar Edition, which had been receiv'd and approv'd of for several Centuries.

ProL. 11.

*Walton* in his 11<sup>th</sup> Discourse speaks much better of the *Hebrew Samaritan Pentateuch*, and the *Samaritan Translations*: But as I have largely treated hereof in the two first Books of this *Criticism*, it would be unnecessary to spend any more time hereupon. I shall only add, That it is hardly probable that the *Samaritans* have corrected their Copy in some places in a publick Assembly, in imitation of that which is commonly suppos'd to have been held under *Esdras*: *Walton* who looks upon this Opinion as probable, has alledg'd no proof hereof. Besides, the *Hebrew Samaritan Pentateuch* seems to me to be no less authentick, than the Hebrew Copy of the same *Pentateuch* us'd by the *Jews*, since they are Copies from the same Original, which differ only in Characters, excepting in some various Readings. *Walton* however denies the *Hebrew Samaritan Pentateuch* to be really authentick; but we may as well deny the *Hebrew Pentateuch* of the *Jews*

*Jews* to be authentick, since it is certain that their Copy is no less defective than that of the *Samaritans*; and if the *Samaritans* have no true Scripture, because they were Schismatics, we may also say that all the Hereticks and Schismatics separated from the Church, have no authentick Bible. But as the Bible is in it self of a Divine and Canonical Authority, it may be that the *Samaritans* had more correct Copies of the Bible than the *Jews*, although the true Explanation of the Scripture was rather preserv'd amongst the *Jews*, whilst they were the People of God, than amongst the *Samaritans*, which were Schismatics.

*Walton* in his 12<sup>th</sup> Discourse speaks pretty exactly concerning the *ProL. 12:* *Chaldean Paraphrases*, only he follows the common Opinion, which makes *Onkelos* to be the Author of the Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch*, and *Jonathan* of that upon the Books which the *Jews* call *Prophetical*. We can say nothing for certain of the Authors of these Paraphrases, and much less of the Time wherein they liv'd. We ought not therefore to credit every thing which *Walton* in this place says, concerning the Time when *Jonathan* and *Onkelos* compos'd their Paraphrases, because it is grounded only upon the Authority of the *Jews*, whose Histories are full of Fables. I pass by several Observations which I could make upon these Paraphrases, because I have elsewhere largely enough treated of them.

To conclude: Although these Paraphrases are of use, they however are not so useful as *Walton* has affirm'd they are, following herein *Lucas Brugensis*, who has writ an Apology upon this account, in favour of the Divines of *Louvain*. I believe, for example, that we ought not to make use of the Authority of the last Paraphrases, where we often find *Word*, when God is spoken of: I am of opinion, I say, that we ought not to make use of this Authority, to prove the Divinity of the Word in the New Testament. These sort of expressions are otherwise explain'd by the *Jews* than by the *Christians*; and besides it is not prudent to ground the Truths of Christianity upon uncertain Allegories, which most commonly are founded only upon the Imagination of the *Jewish Doctors*.

Lastly, *Walton* affirms that he has prefer'd the Edition of *Basil* before all others; that *Buxtorf* has reform'd the pointing of the *Chaldee Text*, which was not exact in the ancient Editions. But, as has already been observ'd, this Reformation is not yet so exact, as *Buxtorf* had design'd it should be: And besides, he would have done better, to have left in many places the ancient Pointing, or rather to

have put none at all; that every one might have had the liberty to have translated the Text of the Paraphrases, according to the sense which he thought was most natural; whereas, as these Paraphrases are printed in the *English Polyglott*, the sense is sometimes too much limited, because some Letters have been taken away, and Points or Vowels have been put in their stead. The Latin Translation of these Paraphrases, which *Walton* affirms is the most exact of all, because it has been corrected, is not wholly free from faults; so that there are some things yet which may be corrected.

ProL. 13. As for the *Syriack* Translations, which *Walton* has treated of in his 13<sup>th</sup> Discourse, we may see what I have said of them in the 2<sup>d</sup> Book of this *Criticisim*, where I have particularly observ'd their faults: Whence we may understand, that these Translations as they are in the *English Polyglott*, are not exact; and besides, that the Latin Translations of these *Syriack* Translations are full of faults, which *Walton* has let alone, although they were easie to be corrected. Neither has he follow'd the best Opinions, in speaking of the Nations which at this day use the *Syriack* Translations of the Scripture: As where he affirms, that the *Marionites* were so call'd, from a Saint of that Name, and not from a Heretick call'd *Maron*; he ought to have believ'd the Reasons which strongly defend this last Opinion, before the Testimony of the *Marionites*, who in this are not to be believ'd. He besides makes *Severus*, Patriarch of *Alexandria*, to be the Author of a *Syriack* Liturgy, which he affirms is us'd by the *Cophites*; but besides that I am of opinion, there never was any Patriarch of *Alexandria* of this Name, the Liturgy or rather form of Baptism which he speaks of, was made by *Severus*, Patriarch of *Antioch*, although the Latin Translation has been printed under the Name of *Severus*, Patriarch of *Alexandria*.

He is less exact in speaking of the *Christians* of *St Thomas*, or the *Nestorians*, which are scatter'd about in the *Indies*, and use also the *Syriack* Tongue in their Offices. He supposes they are all reunited to the Church of *Rome*, and that the *Syriack* Liturgy which they at present use, has been corrected by the Latin Church. But this is only true of a small number of these *Nestorians*; and besides, the other People of the *Levant*, which *Walton* affirms are entirely subjected to the Church of *Rome*, preserve to this day their ancient Belief and Ceremonies, excepting a few which are indeed reunited to the See of *Rome*. What made *Walton* mistake was, that he believ'd all the Acts of Reunion cited by *Baronius* and *Possevin*, without examining whether

ther they were true or no; or whether these Reunions were not dissolved; or lastly, whether there was only one part of them which agreed to them, as hapned among the *Nestorians* and *Jacobites*, who are at present divided upon this account.

*Walton* seems also not to have throughly read the *Syriack* Translation of the Old Testament, when he compos'd this Discourse, because he would not else have propos'd it as an exact Rule, whereby we ought to justify the Original Hebrew. It is certain there is nothing more uncertain than this *Syriack* Translation, which is pretended to have been made from the Hebrew Text, at least as it is printed in the *English Polyglott*. It has much degenerated from its ancient purity, as has been observ'd in the 2<sup>d</sup> Book of this *Criticisim*; and instead of its serving for a Rule to the other Editions of the Bible, the present *Syriack* Copies, which follow other *Syriack* or *Arabick* Translations, by which they have been corrected, are very confus'd; besides there are a great many Errors of Transcribers which ought to be corrected.

Lastly, *Walton* was so much prepossess'd in favour of his Work, that he makes the *Arabick* Translations to be of much more Authority, than he ought to have done, had he seriously read them over. I speak here only of the *Arabick* Translations of the Old Testament, us'd by the *Christians* of the *Levant*, and not of the *Jewish* ones. Besides that these Translations are very modern ones, the Translators have not been exact in their translating. The *Arabian* Transcribers moreover not having the liberty of going to the Originals, for the consulting of them in difficult Points, have committed many Errors, which may easily be observ'd in the printed Copies: *Walton* however could not suffer *Tirinus* to say, that these *Arabick* Translations were defective. *De Navis*, says he, *quos in utraq; esse vult Tirinus, non multum laborandum est, cum omnes Versiones deprimat ipse cum suis, ut Vulgatam Latinam in folio ponat; cum tamen in Vulgata navos etiam plurimos fuisse, & adhuc esse, probatione non eget, nec aliquam Versionem unquam existisse que navos suos non habuerit.* It is strange that *Walton* should compare the faults of the Vulgar, with those of the *Arabick* Translations, to justify in some sort the faults of the latter. In speaking of the Vulgar, he has highly commended it, and he has look'd upon *St Jerom*, who was the Author of it, or at least the most part of it, as a man very understanding in the holy Languages, and now he ranks it with the new Translation, where there are abundance of Errors. *Tirinus* then had reason to take notice that it was defective, and there was



no necessity for *Walton* to have corrected him for it, or that he should compare the faults of this Translation with those of the Vulgar.

To conclude: As it would be too long throughly to examine all *Walton's Prolegomena's* in particular, I design to make a more particular *Criticism* thereon, in a new Edition of these *Prolegomena's*, where the Authors shall be mention'd out of whom *Walton* has made his Collection, and the places wherein he is mistaken, whether it be in the Quotations, or the Consequences which he has drawn from these same Authors. Although his Collection is the best that has been made upon this Subject, we may however say, it would be much more exact, if he had given only a bare Collection, in not altering the Authors which he has abridg'd, whose terms he has yet preserv'd.

*The End of the Third Book.*

*A Catalogue of the chief Editions of the Bible, with several reflections on the same Subject.*

I Intend not here to make an exact Catalogue of all the Bibles that have been printed, but onely to take notice of the chief ones, making some reflections hereupon for the benefit of the Reader. We may find in several Books the names of most printed Bibles, but those who publish these sort of Catalogues seldom give their own observations to make us understand the best Editions. The Book which was printed at London 1672. called *Elenchus Scriptorum in Sacram Scripturam*, contains indeed a Catalogue of several Bibles, and in most of them the year and place of their several Editions are set down, but besides that this Catalogue is not large enough it is also not exact, and besides the Authour has given onely the names of the Bibles as he found them in other printed Catalogues without correcting of the faults.

*Of Hebrew Bibles.*

THE Hebrew Bibles are either Manuscript or Printed ones, <sup>Bib. Heb.</sup> and there are two sorts of Manuscript Hebrew Bibles, the most exact of which are those which are publicly used in the Synagogues, the others which are less exact are onely for the use of private persons. <sup>Mss.</sup> As they reade in the Synagogues onely the *Pentateuch* and some other little Volumes of the Scripture, the whole Bible is not so exactly writ as the Books which are dedicated to the use of the Synagogues, and besides this great exactness in writing out the publick Books has degenerated into superstition.

As for the manuscript Copies of the Bible which are for private use there are few of them exact, unless it be such as were writ for persons of quality amongst the *Jews*. We ought to prefer the Spanish Copies before all others, and these Spanish Copies are

are at present to be found at *Constantinople, Salonica* and the other Towns of the *Levant*, whither they fled after having been driven out of *Spain*. The Characters of these Copies are very fair and well proportioned. See what has been observed on this Subject in Chap. 21, 22, 23. of the first Book of this Criticism.

It is hard to find any manuscript Hebrew Copies of the Bible above 700 years old, and they have been all reformed by the *Massoret*. There have been points added to several which at first were writ without points, so that they who have added these points have left out many of the letters called *Ehevi*, that is to say the ancient vowels, to make them better agree with the *Massoret* Copies. This we ought chiefly to take notice of in reading the old Manuscripts, and we ought not to believe that all those places we there meet with corrected were before faulty; but that they have onely been made to agree with the *Massoret* Copies; and this is the reason why all the printed Hebrew Bibles do at present so well agree, because they have exactly followed the *Massoret* correction.

Printed H.b.  
Bibles,

As for the printed Hebrew Bibles there are a great many, and of all sorts. We ought to prefer those printed by the *Jews* before those which have been printed by the *Christians*. There are so many niceties to be observed in the printing of the Hebrew Bibles either in the vowel-points or accents, that it is hard for *Christians* to be exact in these sort of Works.

*Bombergue* has printed at *Venice* a great many Hebrew Bibles in all Volumes; but the most correct Edition is that in *Folio*, with the Chaldæan Paraphrases and the Commentaries of several Rabbins upon the Scripture Text, the great and little *Massoret* being thereto join'd, with a Preface of R. *Jacob Haiim's*, who made the collection of the *Massoret*. Before this Edition *Bombergue* had publish'd another in *Folio* in the year 1517. dedicated to Pope *Leo X.* where there also are the Targums or Chaldæan Paraphrases, with the Commentaries of several Rabbins; but *Elias Levita* and the most learned *Jews* value not this Edition, because the little *Massoret* which is in the Margin is very confused. *Felix Pratensis*, who took the care thereof, not thoroughly understanding the *Massoret*, has not well collected the various readings. If we would then have an exact Hebrew Bible, we must go to *Bombergue's* Edition in *Folio*, where we find at the beginning the Preface of R. *Jacob Haiim*, who was the first who collected what he could find of the

the *Massoret*. This Bible, with the great and little *Massoret*, the Chaldæan Paraphrases, and several Commentaries of the Rabbins upon the Scripture Text, has been four times printed at *Venice*. The first Edition was in 1525. The second in 1548. The third in 1568. The fourth in 1618. The second and third Editions are the best. The fourth has been reform'd by the Inquisitors, especially in the Rabbins Commentaries, whence some things have been taken out which were prejudicial to Christianity, besides that the Characters are not so fair as those of the former Editions.

*Buxtorf* the Father has also printed this same Edition at *Basil*. But although he affirms that his Edition is more exact than any other, the *Jews* however esteem it not, because of the faults in the Rabbins Commentaries, where he has let stand the errors of Transcribers which were in the former Editions, and has also added others anew. We ought to have some good manuscript Copies of these Rabbins Commentaries for the correcting of them in many places; and this *Buxtorf* ought rather to have apply'd himself to than to the correcting of the pointing in the Chaldæe Text. This new Edition has nothing peculiar to it self except the correction of the points or vowels of this Text, and a Treatise of the *Massoret* in Latin which may be usefull to those who apply themselves to this study.

Besides the Hebrew Bibles in *Folio*, *Bombergue* has printed a great many in *Quarto*, in *Octavo* and other Volumes. The *Jews* of *Venice* have also printed several; but it would be tedious to make a Catalogue of all the Bibles printed by the *Jews* of *Italy* and *Germany*; I shall onely observe that the *Jews* value most some Editions of *Pesaro, Mantoua, and Franckfort* upon the *Oder*. For fair Characters there are few Bibles come nigh that of *Robert Stephens* in *Quarto*, at least one part of that Bible; but it is not very correct: There is another of *Robert Stephens* in *Decimo Sexto*, which is also in a fair Character, and is much more correct than the other in *Quarto*. *Plantin* has also printed several Hebrew Bibles at *Antwerp* in a very fair Character, and they are pretty exact, especially those in *Quarto*, the best of which is that of 1566. The Edition of *Menassah Ben Israel* in *Quarto* at *Amsterdam* in 1535: has this conveniency, that it is not onely correct but it also has two Columns, whereas the Editions of *Robert Stephens* and *Plantin* are in long lines, and consequently inconvenient

for the Reader. The Jews of Amsterdam made a new Edition of the Bible in *Octavo* in 1661. which is look't upon as a very correct one. It has at least this cōveniency that the Verses are mark'd in the Margin, and therefore answers to our Latin Bibles and Concordances. Lastly, *Jacob Lombroso* made a new Edition in *Quarto* in 1539. at *Venice*, and although the Hebrew Characters are not altogether fair, it has however at the bottom of each page some little literal Notes which illustrate the difficulties of the Text. Besides the places of the Text are mark'd with an Asterisk where we ought to reade the Point or Vowel *Camets* by a *Camets Hatuph*, that is to say an *o* instead of an *a*.

The Jews have not onely printed their Hebrew Bibles compleat, but they have besides several Editions of the *Pentateuch* of *Moses*, and of the five Books which they call *The five little Volumes*, because these Books are convenient for them by reason of their being read in the Synagogues, and they often join hewith the Targums or Chaldæan Paraphrases, which serve instead of Glosses, and sometimes the Commentaries of *Raschi* who is their chief Authour upon the Bible, because he was a great Divine and very well understood their Traditions. They usually print these *Pentateuchs* in little Characters, for the more convenient carrying of them in their travels.

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*Of the Polyglotte Bibles, with a Project for the making of a Polyglotte in abridgment.*

WE call those Polyglotte Bibles which are in several Tongues; the Jews of *Constantinople* have printed two *Pentateuchs* after this manner, in one of which we find the Hebrew Text in large Characters in the midst, on one side of which is the Targum or Chaldæan Paraphrase of *Onkelos* in Characters of an indifferent size, and on the other side is the Paraphrase of the same *Pentateuch*, writ in Persian by a Jew call'd *Tusdu* from the name of his Town; besides these three Columns, there is on the top of the Page the Arabian Paraphrase of *Saadia Gaon*, and at the bottom of the Page the Commentary of *Raschi*, that is to say of *R. Solomon Isaacki*, who is usually call'd *Irchi*.

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We may observe that both the Persian and Arabian are printed in Hebrew Characters.

The same Jews of *Constantinople* have printed another Polyglotte *Pentateuch* almost after the same manner as the first. The Hebrew Text is in the middle, on the one side is a Greek Translation thereof, and on the other a Translation into Spanish. These two Paraphrases or Translations are printed in Hebrew Characters with the Points and Vowels for the fixing of the pronunciation of these two Tongues. Lastly, the Targum or Chaldæan Paraphrase is on the top of the Page, and the Commentary of *Raschi* at the bottom.

The most famous Polyglotte Bibles amongst the Christians are the Bibles of *Alcala* or *Complute*, that of *Philip II*, or of *Antwerp*, the French one or Mr. *Le Jay's*. and the English one. There is in the Polyglotte of *Alcala*, the Hebrew Text, the Chaldæan Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch* onely, the Greek Septuagint Translation, and the vulgar Latin one. There is no other Latin Translation from the Hebrew but this last Translation ascrib'd to *Saint Jerom*; whereas there is a literal Translation join'd to the Greek Septuagint. *Francis Ximenes de Sineros*, Cardinal and Archbishop of *Toledo*, who is the Authour of this great Work, observes, in a Letter to Pope *Leo X*, that it was convenient to give the Scripture in its Original, because there is no Translation of the Bible that can perfectly represent these Originals, and to conform himself to the authority of *S. Jerom*, *S. Augustin*, and the other Fathers who thought we ought to have recourse to the Hebrew Text for the Books of the Old Testament, and to the Greek Text for the New, *Unius cujusque ideomatis, sua sunt verborum proprietates quorum totam vim non possit quantumlibet absoluta trad. Etio prorsus exprimere, tum id maxime in ea lingua accidit per quam os Domini locutum est.* Then he in the same place adds, *accedit quod ubicumque latinorum codicum varietas est aut depravata lectiois suspicio, ad primam Scripturae originem recurrendum est, sicut Beatus Hieronymus, & Augustinus, ac ceteri Ecclesiastici Tractatores admonent; ita librorum veteris Testamenti sinceritas ex Hebraica veritate; Novi autem ex Græcis exemplaribus examinetur.*

This Cardinal however in the following Preface seems to destroy what he had said in favour of the Hebrew Text. For he acknowledges that he has placed *S. Jerom's* ancient Latin Translation

*Bible of Alcala or Complute in 1515.*

*Cardin. Xim. in Prologom. ad Leo P.*

lation betwixt the Hebrew Text and Septuagint Translation, as betwixt the Synagogue and the Eastern Church, to represent our Saviour betwixt the two Thieves, *Medium autem*, says he, *inter has Latinam B. Hieronimi Translationem velut inter Synagogam, & Orientalem Ecclesiam posuimus tanquam duos hinc & inde latrones; Medium autem Jesum hoc est Romanam Ecclesiam collocantes hac enim sola supra firmam petram edificata, reliquis à recta Scriptura intelligentia deviantibus immobilis semper in veritate permansit.*

One would hardly believe that these two Prefaces were made by the same person, one of which sets up the Hebrew Text above all Translations, and the other wholly destroys it. Besides the method which has been observed throughout this Work plainly shews that the Hebrew Text was supposed to be as a rule to all the Greek and Latin Translations; since they have often very improperly and where there was no need been corrected by this Text; especially the Greek Septuagint, which has been reform'd or rather corrupted in many places to make it better agree with the original Hebrew. As for the Vulgar, the Latin Copies being then defective, it has also been corrected not onely by the ancient Latin Copies but also by the Hebrew Text, so that not onely the Transcribers errors have been corrected, but several things have been left out which were not thought fit to be there.

As for the New Testament the Greek Text has been printed without accents, because it was supposed there were none in the first Greek Originals. *Quod in Novi Testamenti Græca Editione aliter quam in veteri nuda tantum litera sine ullis spirituum aut tonorum notis impressa publicentur, opera pretium visum est hujus tibi rei rationem assignare, ea enim hujusmodi, antiquissimos Græcos absque hisce fastigiis literarum scriptitasse notius est, quam ut sit multis argumentis comprobandum.* Although these Accents and Notes of Aspiration, as the Grammarians call them, do in many places limit the sense, they have however been put in the Septuagint, because it is barely a Translation and not an original Text; but we ought not therefore to mark the points or vowels of the Hebrew Text, because they were not in the first originals of the Old Testament.

The Polyglotte of *Antwerp*, otherwise call'd the Bible Royal, or *Philip the Second's*, has, besides the Hebrew Text and the Septuagint Translation, which are in the Bible of *Alcala* or *Complute*, the Chaldæan Paraphrases, with a Latin Translation of most of the

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the Books of the Old Testament. Cardinal *Ximenes* would publish no other Chaldæan Paraphrase than that of *Orkelos's* upon the *Pentateuch*; he however translated the other Paraphrases into Latin, leaving out the stories of the *Talmud*, and plac'd them in the Library of *Alcala* without publishing of them. But *Arias Montanus*, who undertook the making of this new Polyglotte was not so scrupulous. He printed whatever he could find of these Paraphrases, leaving out however some Fables; and he thought hereby to supply the first design of Cardinal *Ximenes*, who, according to him, had resolv'd to have printed them apart with their Latin Translations if he had not died so soon. There is also in this Bible a Latin Translation which answers word for word to the Hebrew Text: it is not however join'd in the body of the Bible either with the original Hebrew, the Septuagint Translation, the Targum or Chaldæan Paraphrases; but is plac'd at the end of all as a separate Work onely for their use who would learn Hebrew. Wherefore *Arias Montanus* affirms he has made choice of *Paynin's* Translation which is the most literal, and he has corrected it in many places to make it yet more literal; there is then no other Latin Translation in the body of this Edition but the Vulgar, which is in one of the Columns over against the Hebrew Text. The Septuagint Translation is also upon another Column with a Latin Translation, and thus each page has onely two Columns, with the Chaldæan Paraphrase at the bottom. The same faults which we have already observ'd to be in the Septuagint and vulgar Latin Translations in the Bible of *Alcala*, are in this Edition of *Antwerp*.

As for the New Testament, besides the Greek and Latin, there is an ancient Syriack Translation, priuted both in Syriack and Hebrew Characters, with points for their more easie reading thereof who are more us'd to reade Hebrew than Syriack; there is also join'd a Latin one to this Syriack Translation. There are besides many more Dictionaries in this new Edition of *Antwerp* than in that of *Alcala*, whereto we may add several little Treatises which were thought necessary for the illustrating of the most difficult places of the Text, and lastly, the Characters and Paper are better. This Work was very well receiv'd throughout *Europe*, and approv'd of by the most famous Universities. As the Spaniards were the first Authours of it so likewise they were the first who oppos'd it, although it had been undertaken by

Arias Mont.  
Præf. ad  
Lectur.

by the advice of the most famous Doctours of that Country, and by the permission of Philip II; they writ against the Divines of Louvain especially by reason of the Targums or Chaldæan Paraphrases which these had approv'd of. Several Divines of Paris commended this great Work in these words, *Sacra Biblia Philippi II. & Hebraice, Syriace, Græce, & Latine expressa ad formam Complutensium Bibliorum, olim in Hispania impressorum vidimus, digna denique censuimus quæ à Catholicis legerentur & opponerentur falsis & impiis hæreticorum Translationibus, quibus fucum imperitis linguarum facere conantur.* Pope Gregory XIII, in a Letter to Philip II. shews the particular esteem he had of this Bible, which he calls *Opus vere Regium*. Lastly, the Emperour and King of France gave leave for this great Bible to be sold throughout their Territories; in a word, there had not before that time been any Work so great or usefull upon this Subject.

Bible of  
Mr. Le Jay.  
in 1645.

As the Copies of the Bible of Antwerp were in a little time all sold off and began to become scarce, Mr. Le Jay undertook the making of a new and more large Edition; and he indeed spar'd nothing for the accomplishing of so great a design, which seem'd to be too great for a private person to go about. This Bible of Paris contains whatever is in the Bible of Antwerp, excepting some Prolegomenas compos'd by Arias Montanus, and the Hebrew, Greek and Syriack Dictionaries, and therefore it has the same faults both in the Septuagint and vulgar Translations. It is strange that Father Morin, who also bore part in this Edition, should print at Paris the Septuagint Translation, according to the Copy of the Vatican, which is look't upon as the most correct, apart, and not put it in this new Bible; it is no less strange that the vulgar Edition, according to the last correction of Rome, should not be in.

The French Polyglotte has however this advantage over that of Antwerp that it has the Syriack and Arabick Translations of the Old Testament with their Latin Translations, and besides the Hebrew Samaritan Text of the *Pentateuch*, and the Samaritan Translation thereof in Samaritan Characters. As for the New Testament there is nothing in the Bible of Antwerp which is not in the French one, and there is moreover an Arabick Translation, with the Latin one thereof.

Although much time was spent about this Work, and Mr. Le Jay spar'd neither pains nor cost, it cannot however be said to be compleat;

compleat; for there wants those Prefaces or Prolegomena's which were necessary. Wherefore we know not for example, whence the Arabick Copy of the *Pentateuch* has been taken, which differs much from that of Saadias Gaon's. There are several other things which the Reader ought to have been instructed of for the better understanding of this Polyglotte. The reason of this confusion is because they who took upon them the care of this Work disagreed among themselves, and endeavour'd rather to satisfy their own passions by writing one against another than to be usefull to the publick.

There are however some Prefaces for the giving of an account of the whole Work, although they are not sufficient for that purpose. The general Preface runs upon the authority of the Scripture, in relation to that of the Church, who alone can give us the true originals of the Bible: *Illic originales Textus de quibus non mediocris hodie Controversia est sublatis involucris innotescunt, & qua quotidie suboriuntur difficultates, in illa sede tranquillitatis enodata feliciter desinent.* There is afterwards each Text of the Bible particularly treated of, but so as not to give us a perfect knowledge thereof, besides that it seems to be full of prejudices in favour of the two ancient Translations of the Church, as if one could not allow them all the authority they can challenge without preferring them before the Hebrew Text. For the demonstrating the authority of the Septuagint Translation, the Testimony of a Mahometan Authour is alledg'd, who prefer'd it in a certain point of Chronology before the Hebrew Text, whence the Authour of this Preface concludes that the Septuagint Translation is of greater authority amongst the Mahometans than the Hebrew Jewish or Hebrew Samaritan Text. *Non tantum apud Christianos LXX. Interpretum versio supreme autoritatis fuit, sed apud Mahometanos etiam ipsos.*

If we will believe the Authour of this Preface, the Arabick Translation in this Edition inserted is of so great authority that S. Jerom by the help of it restor'd seven or eight hundred verses which in his time were wanting in the Book of Job; but whosoever talks at this rate understands but very little of the Arabian Translations; besides S. Jerom is very improperly here quoted, who says nothing hereof in his Preface to Job. But what is yet more strange is that Mr. Le Jay, in this same Preface, should in a few words ruine his great Work, by affirming that of all the



Bibles we ought at present to receive onely the ancient Latin Translation, because it is writ in the Churches Language, which ought herein to claim as much priviledge as the Synagogue, he also adds that they who have recourse to other Texts of the Bible than the Vulgar do introduce anew the confusion of *Babel* into the Church. *Qui ergo, says he, perplexas Scripturæ Sacre difficultates aliorum velit contextuum adminiculo rimari, quam qui nunc in communi Ecclesiæ observatione receptus est, aut qui Grammaticis re, ulis, & elementis salutis nostræ summam, aut abstrusæ fidei mysteria dirimere conatur, is certe labio electo prorsus obunciet, is promiscuam confusionem revocet, is maledictam à Deo Babelem excitet à fundamentis.* Whence he at last concludes that the Vulgar is the onely true Original of the Scripture, which we ought to consult when we meet with any difficulties. *Pro certo, atque indubitato apud nos esse debet, vulgatam Editionem quæ communi Catholicæ Ecclesiæ Lingua circumfertur, verum esse ac genuinum Sacre Scripturæ fontem, hanc consulendam ubique, inde fidei dogmata repetenda.* If Mr. *Le Jay* was hereof perswaded he did very ill to ruine himself by printing of a Bible where there were a great many different Texts; he ought onely to have printed the vulgar Edition, which, according to him, is the true Original by which we ought to regulate the Hebrew Text.

Besides this Preface of Mr. *Le Jay's* there is another of Father *Morin's*, who fully speaks of all things relating to the Edition of the Hebrew Samaritan *Pentateuch*, and the Translations us'd by the Samaritans. It would have been well if *Gabriel Sionita*, and *Abraham Ecchellenfis*, two *Maronites*, had also writ Prefaces to this great Work, whereby we might have understood the Arabick and Syriack Translations. To conclude, although this Work is much bigger and fairer than the Bible of *Antwerp*, as well for the number of the Texts as for the largeness of the Paper and the fairness of the Characters; it however has this inconvenience that we must consult two Volumes upon each Book, by reason that all the different Translations with their original Texts could not be contained in one Volume.

As Mr. *Le Jay's* Bible was inconvenient because of the greatness of its Volumes, so that few persons could be at the expense to buy it, the English thought of making a new Edition which might be more convenient and usefull to private persons. In a word *Walton* took this charge upon him, and had better success in his

English Polyglotte by  
Walton in  
1697.

his design than Mr. *Le Jay* had had. This last Edition is call'd the English Polyglotte, which is not indeed so beautifull as to the largeness of its Paper or the fairness of its Character as the French one, but it is more large and convenient; and we at once see the Original Texts with the Translations rank'd upon several Columns.

In the English Polyglotte over against the Hebrew Text is the Vulgar, according to the Edition review'd and corrected by *Clement VIII.* whereas in the French Polyglotte the Vulgar is the same with that in the Bible of *Antwerp.* There is also an Interlineary Latin Translation from the Hebrew Text, which is not in the French Polyglotte, which has no other Latin Translation from the Hebrew but the Vulgar. The Septuagint is not the same with that in the Bible of *Antwerp*, which the French Polyglotte has follow'd word for word; but the Greek Text of the Edition of *Rome* by *Sixtus V.*; and there are moreover added the various readings of another ancient Copy, which the English call the *Alexandridn*; the Latin Translation from the Septuagint is that which *Flaminius Nobilius* printed at *Rome* by the authority of Pope *Sixtus V.* These are most of the things which the English Polyglotte excels the French one in.

There is also in the English Polyglotte an Æthiopian Translation of the *Psalms* and *Canticles*, which is wanting in the French one; there is also an Æthiopian Translation of the New Testament, and the Evangelists translated into Persian, which are also wanting in the French Polyglotte. Lastly, besides all these advantages which the English Bible has over the French one, there are also at the beginning of this Edition some preliminary Discourses or Prolegomenas upon the original Texts, and upon each Edition in particular; and at the end thereof is added a whole Volume of the various readings of all these different Editions: in a word, we have no Bible so compleat as the English Polyglotte.

One might however have made it more perfect by spending as much time as was necessary for compleating of so great a Work. First the Interlineary Latin Translation of the Hebrew Text, which is *Pagnin's* corrected by *Ariai Montanus*, ought not to have been in because it is too barbarous, and full of faults. One might have put in a more exact one which should have better express'd both the sense and letter. Secondly, there might have been

been found better Latin Translations of all the Eastern Translations; and there are many faults of Transcribers in these Eastern Versions, which ought to have been corrected. Thirdly, there was no necessity for printing the Copies of the Syriack and Arabick Translations which were already printed in the French Bible; there might have been better Copies found especially of the Arabick Translations.

A Project  
for a new  
Polyglotte.

But we have spoke enough of the Polyglotte Bibles, I shall onely here add a Project for a new Polyglotte, which may be abridg'd and usefull for private persons; As *Origen* heretofore abridg'd the Hebrew Text and the different Greek Translations of that Text into one body of a Bible; we might methinks also easily abridge the English Polyglotte, by printing onely those places which differ one from another. What need we, for example, print the Hebrew Samaritan Text entire, which usually differs from the Hebrew Jewish one onely but in Characters? and therefore we need onely print the Hebrew Jewish Text, and mark in the Margin in Hebrew Characters the various readings of the Hebrew Samaritan Text; the same thing might be observed as to the Chaldee and Samaritan Translations, which agree pretty exactly with the Hebrew Text of the *Pentateuch*. As for the Chaldee Translations which agree not so well with the Text, they may be laid aside, because they are rather Glosses or Commentaries than Translations; we ought not in a Polyglotte to confound what relates purely to the Text, with what concerns the explanation of this Text, and therefore we ought to mark in the Margin onely what makes really a various reading.

These same rules may be apply'd to all the other Translations of the Bible; for either they were made from the Hebrew Text, or from the Greek Septuagint Translation. In those which have been made from the Hebrew Text, we ought exactly to observe what things can cause a various reading in the Hebrew Text. So also in those made from the Septuagint we ought to observe what can create a various reading in the Septuagint. Lastly, in those which are mixt, as the Syriack Translation is which agrees not so exactly with the Hebrew Text, but that it has in many places been corrected by the Septuagint, we ought to take greater care for fear of easily multiplying the various readings. It would also be very convenient to search after the Syriack and Arabick Translations made from the Septuagint for the restoring  
as much

as much as possibly we can this ancient Greek Translation.

Our new Polyglotte ought then to be compos'd but of three Texts, to wit, the original Hebrew, the Septuagint Translation and the vulgar Edition. The various readings of these three Texts may be mark'd in the Margin; which may be collected as I have already set down, and although the Vulgar has been pretty exactly corrected, there are yet therein a great many various readings which ought to be mark'd. They themselves who corrected it acknowledge they had left many faults which they did not think fit to correct. These three Texts the Hebrew, Greek and Latin are sufficient; because we have by this means the Scripture in its Original, as the *Jews* at present have it, and all the Translations approv'd of both by the Eastern and Western Churches. To conclude, I am of opinion that in this new abridg'd Polyglotte it would be convenient to put the various readings in the Margins and not in the body of the Text, as *Origen* did, because although we are never so cautious in the adding of signs and marks, for the making of all necessary distinctions, it is impossible but that some confusion will happen through length of time, by reason of these marks not being exactly preserv'd.

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*Of the Samaritan, Chaldæan, Syriack, Arabick, and  
Æthiopian Bibles.*

THE Samaritans receiving no other Books of the Scripture Samar. b. b. but the *Pentateuch*, we have from them onely the Hebrew Text writ in their Characters, and a Samaritan Translation of the same *Pentateuch*; they are not printed by themselves, and therefore they are onely to be found in the English and French Polyglottes.

The *Jews* use the Chaldæan Paraphrases as a Gloss for the explaining of the Hebrew Text; as may be seen in some Editions of *Venice* and *Hanau*. *Bombergue* has inserted them into the great Bibles of *Venice*, and *Buxtorf* also in his Edition of *Basil*: but we may more conveniently read them in the Bible of *Antwerp*, and the French and English Polyglottes, especially in the latter, where they are set down at large, because in these Polyglottes there is added a Latin Translation of these Paraphrases.

We

Syr. Bib.

We also find very few Syriack Translations of the Scripture printed apart, and therefore we ought to look for them in the English and French Polyglottes. There are however some particular Editions of the Syriack *Psalter*. *Gabriel Sionita* printed a very fair Edition at *Paris* in 1625. with a Latin Translation thereof: The New Testament has also been several times printed in this Tongue; the best Edition is that of *Vienna* in 1562. by *Widmanstadius*.

Arab. Bib.

As for the Arabian Translations, besides what is printed in the English and French Polyglottes, the *Jews of Constantinople* have printed the Paraphrase of the *Pentateuch*, which is much more literal, there has also been printed at *Rome* an Arabian Bible translated from the vulgar Edition: I mention'd onely the *Pentateuch* in speaking of the Arabian Translations in the second part of this Work, not having at that time seen the other parts. But these sort of Arabian Translations made from the vulgar Latin can be of no use. There has also been printed at *Rome* an Arabian *Psalter*, with a Latin Translation thereof, whereto we may add the Edition of the *Psalter* in several Tongues, by *Augustinus Nebiensis* where there is also an Arabick Translation. There is also the New Testament printed by it self in Arabick at *Rome*.

Æthiop. Bib.

Lastly, we have the *Psalter*, the *Canticles* and the New Testament printed by themselves in the Æthiopian Tongue, and since re-printed in the English Polyglotte.

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### Of the Greek Bibles.

Gk. Bib.  
Alcala.

ALL the different Editions of the Greek Septuagint Translation may be reduced to three, as we have already observ'd, the first is that which Cardinal *Ximenes* printed in 1515. in the Bible of *Alcala* or *Complute*. This Cardinal had good Greek manuscript Copies of the Septuagint, but in endeavouring to correct them by the Hebrew Text he corrupted them in many places, by not understanding how to correct the Greek Copies. This Edition of *Alcala* has however been re-printed in the Bible of *Antwerp*, in the French Polyglotte and in the Bible with four Columns, commonly call'd *Variables*'s.

The

The second Edition is that of *Venice* in 1518, where the Greek Text of the Septuagint is printed onely as it was in the manuscript Copy; and therefore this Edition is better than the former, although there are many errors of Transcribers, and that it differs much from the true Edition of the Septuagint, which is hard to be restor'd. It was afterwards printed at *Straßbourg*, *Basil*, *Franckfort* and several other places, with some alterations to make it come nigher the Hebrew, in imitation of that of *Alcala*. The best Edition is that of *Franckfort*, where there are Scholias inserted to mark the different interpretations of the ancient Greek Translators. Several are of opinion that *Junius* was the Authour of this new Edition of *Franckfort* with Greek Scholias.

The third and best Edition is that of *Rome* in 1587. with Greek Scholias; Father *Morin* re-printed it at *Paris* in 1628. adding thereto *Nobilius*'s Latin Translation which had been printed by it self at *Rome*: He also added the Verses which are not mark'd in the ancient Editions, and perhaps he thought it was better to re-print it without any distinctions from the manuscript Copies, because that very often cuts the sense of the Text off very improperly, especially when every line is a verse; nay, although this distinction was made onely by points, as it is in Father *Morin*'s Edition, that moreover interrupts the sense, unless these points are mark'd exactly in those places where the sense ends. It would perhaps be better if the Text was not so often divided, and there were fewer verses. But it is enough that we have spoke hereof in general, that we may take notice of it. The English have inserted into their Polyglotte this last Edition, which they prefer before all others; they have also printed it by it self in *Quarto* and *Duodecimo*, making however some corrections. Wherefore to have a good Greek Copy of this last Edition, we must go to the Edition of *Rome*, as we ought to go to the Edition of *Alde* or *Venice* for the second Edition.

Of

## Of the Latin Bibles.

The ancient  
Latin Bible.

WE may rank the Latin Bibles into three Classes, to wit, the ancient Vulgar one made from the Septuagint; the present Vulgar, most of which was made from the Hebrew Text; and lastly, the modern Translations which have been made from the same original Hebrew. We have nothing of the ancient Vulgar, which was us'd in the Western Church for the first Centuries, but what we find in the Fathers; where also it is not always exactly set down, because most of the Fathers did not exactly follow it in their quotations. *Nobilius* however has made as exact a collection hereof as possibly he could, which was printed at Rome in 1588.

The Vulgar  
Bible.

As for the other vulgar Edition, which is at present us'd in the Western Church, there are a great many Editions of it, and it differs much according to different places, after the manner of the ancient Vulgar. Before the corrections of the Popes *Sixtus V.* and *Clement VIII.*, several persons had took the liberty of correcting it in several places, which reformation is chiefly to be seen in the Edition of *Alcala* or *Complute*. The Divines of *Paris* and *Louvain* apply'd themselves most to this correction, and especially the latter, who have often reform'd the Latin Text of the Vulgar, setting down in the Margins the manuscript Copies, and the Authours they made use of. All these Latin Editions of the Divines of *Louvain* are good and usefull, because they have set down the reasons of the varieties, whereas in the Edition of the Divines of *Paris*, before which is the Preface of *James le Febvre*, Dr. of *Sorbonne*, they have not set down the Copies they consulted. This Dr. has us'd many invectives in his Preface against the Hereticks or innovatours of that time, who, according to him, had corrupted the Bible in many places, and he publish'd this Edition by reason of the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, commending however them who apply themselves to the studying of the Greek and Hebrew Tongues, which he thinks are absolutely necessary for the understanding of the Scripture, and the answering of the Protestants, who pretend to find great help in the Tongues for the maintaining of their novelties. *Theologis*, says he, *hoc vel imprimis tempore necessarium linguarum peritiam, si unquam alias propter*

varia

*varia & ineluctabilia, si Deus non sit propitius nobis, ab Huguenot-  
tis Hereticis ex linguarum non peritia qua abutuntur, sed fallacia in-  
tentate.* There are join'd with this Edition the *Scholias* of *John  
Benois*, Dr. of Divinity, and it is usually call'd the Bible of *Jo-  
hannis Benedicti*; these *Scholias* consist most of them in little  
Notes drawn from the Fathers for the explaining of the sense  
of the Text, and they belong rather to Divinity than Cri-  
ticism.

Besides these ancient Editions of the Vulgar by Cardinal *Xime-  
nes* in the Bible of *Alcala*, and the Divines of *Louvain* and *Paris*, Latin Bible  
of Robert  
Stephens.  
*Robert Stephens* has publish'd several with the various readings  
which he had found in very good manuscript Copies, making use  
also of the Edition of *Alcala*. But as he was prejudiced in favour  
of the new Sects, his Editions of the Bible became suspected by  
reason of the Summaries and little Notes which he had therein  
inserted; this occasion'd all those disputes which he held for se-  
veral years against the Divines of *Paris*. He printed the whole  
Bible in a great Volume according to the vulgar Edition in 1532.  
with his corrections. He made another Edition with many more  
corrections in 1541, where he affirms he has restor'd many places  
by an ancient Copy. *Simon de Colines* had before him in 1522.  
printed a New Testament according to the vulgar Edition which  
was pretty correct, which was very much in those times. This  
same Bible of *Robert Stephens* in 1532. was re-printed at *Lyons* in  
1537. and in his Edition in *Octavo* in 1545 he join'd the new  
Translation of *Leon de Juda* from the Hebrew, with the Vulgar  
corrected, setting down the various readings in the Margins;  
he has also in other Editions given us the same Vulgar with a  
Translation from the Hebrew. In a word, *Robert Stephens* has  
took as much pains as any one in correcting of the Vulgar, and  
he has been pretty happy in his search for good Latin Co-  
pies.

Private persons took the liberty of correcting the vulgar Edi- Bible of  
Sixtus V.  
tion till *Sixtus V.* publish'd a new Edition which was more correct,  
making use herein of the best Copies and the most able Divines  
and Criticks he could find: This Pope publish'd a Bull, wherein  
he explains at large the reasons and method of his correction.  
As this Bull is not at present usually printed with the Bibles, it is  
fit we should here set down in short the contents thereof, that we  
may more particularly understand the Edition of *Sixtus V.*

Bulla Sixti V.  
anni 1589.

He first finds fault with all the modern Translations, whether they were made by Catholics or Hereticks. *Cum non in Hereticis tantum, says he, sed in Catholicis etiam quibusdam, tametsi concilio dissimili subortum sit nimium quoddam nec plane laudabile studium & quasi libido Scripturas Latine interpretandi;* then he declares that the Decree of the Council of Trent was made onely to hinder this great number of Translations, *in prisum illud Editionum Chaos, which S. Jerom and S. Augustine make mention of. But as the vulgar Edition approv'd of by the Fathers of the Council of Trent was full of faults, and every one corrected them as he thought fit, these same Fathers order'd a new Edition, which should be corrected, for preserving of an uniformity in all the Latin Bibles: Sixtus V. first undertook this Work. Itaque viros, says he, complures doctos qui sanctarum Scripturarum, Sacra Theologia, multarumque linguarum scientia ac diuturno variarum rerum usu acrisque cum aliquo discernendum est iudicio & solertia, prastarent, delegimus ac simul congregavimus, ut in germana sinceraque sacri Textus Editione perquirenda strenue laborarent, nobisque adjuvmenta forent.*

He rely'd not wholly upon the Judgment of those learned persons he had gather'd together, but he examin'd himself the various readings, and the different opinions concerning these varieties, thereby to make a better choice of what he thought was the best. *In quo, says he, in speaking of the method he observ'd in this correction, operam quotidianam eamque pluribus horis collocandam duximus. Aliorum quidem labor fuit in consulendo, noster autem in eo quod ex pluribus esset optimum deligendo.* And therefore this Bible was very properly call'd *The Bible of Sixtus V.* because he bore the greatest part herein, and affirms that he corrected even the very faults of the Printing, and mended the pointings when he found them not exact. *Eaque res, says he, quo magis ino corrupte perficeretur nostra nos ipsi correximus, siqua Prælo vitia obrepserant, ut que confusa aut facile confundi posse videbantur, ea intervallo Scripture, ac majoribus notis & interpunctione distinximus.* He consulted the best and most ancient Latin Copies he could find, joining therewith the Commentaries of the Fathers, and other ancient Ecclesiastical Authours; and lastly, when he could not reconcile the difficulties by the Latin Books onely he had recourse to the Hebrew and Greek Copies, to make choice of the various Latin readings, which could not be determin'd by the Latin Copies.

In his

*In his tandem que neque codicum, neque doctorum magna consensione satis munita videbantur a Hebraeorum Græcorumque exemplaribus duximus confugiendum, non eo tamen ut inde Latini interpretis errata corrigantur.* He acknowledges that some places might be more properly and neatly translated than they are in the vulgar, as some affirm; but he looks upon this pretended exactness onely as niceties of Grammar which ought not to be took notice of.

This method Pope Sixtus V. observ'd in correcting of the vulgar Edition, and he gave this for the true Edition of the Vulgar, which had been ordain'd by the Fathers of the Council of Trent to serve as a rule for the whole Latin Church. He in the same Bull forbid any other Edition of the Vulgar, with the various readings which were before usually put in the Margins, to be printed for the time to come. Lastly, to give the greater authority to this new correction, he commanded that all the Missals, Breviaries, Offices, Psalters, the Pontificals, Rituals and other Ecclesiastical Books should be corrected by this Edition. *Que vero antehac quibuscumque in locis impressa sunt, juxta hunc nostrum Textum ad verbum & ad litteram corrigantur, idque tam in impressis, quam in imprimendis Missalibus, Breviariis, Officiis, Ritualibus, Pontificalibus, Ceremonialibus, & aliis Ecclesiasticis Libris: Quoad eam tantum Scriptura lectiones, & verba que ex vulgata Editione sumpta, atque in istis Libris inserta fuisse constat.* So that the conclusion of this Bull of Sixtus V. is, that no Latin Bible whether printed or manuscript, of what antiquity soever, shall for the future be of any authority unless it agrees with his new correction.

This Bull however signify'd nothing at all; for Clement VIII. some time after undertook to correct the vulgar again, not looking upon the correction of Sixtus V. to be exact enough; and this correction of Clement VIII. was finish'd in 1592. and this the Latin Church at present makes use of. The Bull of Clement VIII. for authorising of his new Edition of the Vulgar begins thus; *Cum sacrorum Bibliorum vulgata Editionis Textus summis laboribus aut vigiliis restitutus, ac quam accuratissime mendis expurgatus;* Here is no mention of the method which was observ'd in the correcting of it as in the Bull of Sixtus V; but in a Preface apart which is at the beginning of all the Editions of the Bible of Clement VIII. the authority of the Vulgar is largely spoke of, and almost in the same words as in the Bull of Sixtus V. It is also observ'd in this Preface, that Pope Sixtus V. not being

¶ 2

satisfy'd

Bible of  
Clem. VIII.

Bulla  
Clem. VIII.  
ann. 1592.

Pref. ad  
E. III.  
Clem. VIII.



satisfy'd with his new Edition even after the printing of it, commanded a new one to be made; and that being dead before it was finish'd, his Successours continued it on untill it was publish'd by *Clement VIII.*

What is most considerable in this Preface concerning this last correction of the Vulgar, is that it is there said, that although there are many places corrected as well by the ancient Latin Copies, as by the Hebrew and Greek Originals, and the Commentaries of the Fathers; there are however several places let alone which seem'd to want correcting: *In hac tamen pervulgata lectione, sicut nonnulla consulto mutata, ita etiam alia quæ mutanda videbantur consulto immutata relicta sunt.*

Lastly, that nothing might be inserted into this new Edition of the Vulgar which was not really Canonical, it was thought fit in the Edition which was at *Rome* that the pure Text should onely be inserted, without any summaries, various readings, and even without the Concordances of passages or parallel places. They were not however prohibited from being put into the other Editions which should be made of this same Bible, wherein the various readings might be inserted, so they were not put in the margins of the Text.

It would take up too much time to shew the particular places which have been corrected in these two Editions of *Sixtus V.* and *Clement VIII.* We shall onely observe that these two Popes have not pretended to be infallible in their corrections, nor to have corrected every thing which wanted reformation. Although there were many faults in the Vulgar before its correction, there was however nothing, as *Sixtus V.* affirms, which was contrary to faith or good manners, *Quamvis in hac tanta lectionum varietate nihil hucusque repertum sit quod fidei & morum causis tenebras offundere patnerit?* As for the same Pope's Constitution by which he commands all the *Missals, Breviaries, Rituals,* and other Ecclesiastical Books to be reform'd by his new Edition of the Vulgar, it was so far from being put in execution that Pope *Clement VIII.* by a Bull expressly forbid the *Introitus, Missæ, the Graduals, the Offertories, the Epistles and Gospels* to be corrected by his new Edition, because the Scripture Text was there set down according to the ancient Vulgar, which was us'd throughout the whole Western Church before *S. Jerom's* time, *Progressu temporis sive Typographorum sive aliorum temeritas & audacia effecit, ut multi in ea que*

*Sixtus V.*  
in Bulla.

*Clem. VIII.*  
in Bulla  
ann. 1604.

in his

in his proximis annis excusa sunt *Missalia*, errores irrepsrint, quibus vetustissima illa sacrorum Bibliorum versio que etiam ante *B. Hieronimi* tempora celebris habita est in Ecclesia, & ex qua omnes fere *Missarum introitus, & que dicuntur Gradualia & Offertoria* accepta sunt omnino sublata est. *Epistolarum & Evangeliorum Textus* qui hucusque in *Missæ* solemnibus Prælati est multis in locis perturbatus: *Ipsis Evangeliiis diversa ac prorsus insolita præfixa initia: plurima denique passim pro arbitrio immutata sint, cujus rei prætextus fuisse videtur ut omnia ad præscriptum sacrorum Bibliorum vulgata Editionis revocarentur.* Wherefore *Clement VIII.* expressly forbid these sort of *Missals* which had been very improperly corrupted *Missals, Missalia depravata;* which Constitution is clear contrary to that of *Sixtus V.* who had commanded that they should be all reform'd by his new correction of the Vulgar.

Since that time there has been no other but this last correction of *Clement VIII.* receiv'd in the Western Church; and the Editions of *Robert Stephens,* and the Divines of *Louvain* began to be neglected, which nevertheless were very usefull by reason of the various readings and the little critical Notes in the Margins; wherefore although we are obliged to use in publick the Latin Bible corrected by *Clement VIII.* every one would do well to have for his private use the Editions of *Robert Stephens* and the Divines of *Louvain,* not onely because they who made this last correction of the Bible have not pretended to be infallible; but also because they have affirmed that they have not medled with some places which seem'd to want correction.

There is another correction of the Vulgar wherein not onely the ancient Latin Copy is corrected for the restoring of it to its first form; but the Latin Interpreter is also corrected in places which were thought to be ill translated. *Isidorus Clavius,* whom we have before spoke of, has very injudiciously followed this method, wherefore we have been forbid at *Rome* to call this Edition the Vulgar which he had publish'd under this title. *Vulgata Editio veteris ac Novi Testamenti quorum alterum ad Hebræam, alterum ad Græcam veritatem emendatum, esset diligentissime ut nova Editio non facile decideretur, & vetus tamen hic agnoscat, Venetiis ann. 1542.*

*Luke* and *Andrew Osiander* have each of them printed a new Edition of the Vulgar with corrections from the Hebrew, not withstan-

Bible of  
Iud. Clar.

Index Rom.  
Libror.  
prohib.

Bible of  
the ms.  
Osianders.

withstanding they were Protestants they have kept some respect for the ancient Latin Interpreter, see what has been said of these two Bibles in the second Book of this Criticism.

Pagnin's Bible.

The first of the modern Translations from the Hebrew is that of *Pagnin's* printed at *Lyons* the first time in 1528. he afterwards review'd it and made a second Edition. Several printed this Translation of *Pagnin's* with new Titles, as if it had been corrected and made more exact by the Authour. *Michael Servetus*, who was usually call'd *Michael Villanovanus*, re-printed it at *Lyons* in 1542. in *Folio* for *Hugo de la Porte*, under the title of *Biblia sacra ex sanctis Pagnini Translatione, sed ad Hebraica Lingua amussim novissime ita recognita & Scholiis illustrata, ut plane nova Editio videri possit.* There is at the beginning a Preface of *Michael Villanovanus's*, that is to say of *Michael Servetus's*, who took this name in some other Works. They of *Zurick* made also a new Edition of *Pagnin's* Bible in *Quarto*. *Robert Stephens* printed it also in *Folio* with the Vulgar in 1557. pretending to give us it more correct than it was in the former Editions. It is also in another Edition with four Columns, commonly call'd the Bible of *Variables* printed in 1586. It is also printed at *Hambourg* in a Bible of four Languages, so that *Pagnin's* Translation was very usefull to the Protestants, in the beginning of their Reformation.

Bible of Arias Montanus.

*Arias Montanus* in the great Bible of *Antwerp* or *Philip* the second's, printed also *Pagnin's* Translation, having corrected or rather corrupted it in many places: There have since been several Editions thus corrected in *Folio*, *Quarto* and *Octavo* with the Hebrew Text, because it was thought usefull to those who began to study Hebrew. Look into the second Book of this Criticism.

Munster's, Castallo's, and Tremellius's Bibles.

Look also at the same time upon the Translations of *Sebastian Munster*, whose best Edition is that where the Hebrew Text is upon one Column, and the Latin Translation upon another, with Notes at the bottom of the Pages, of *Sebastian Castallo* or *Chatillon*, whose best Edition is that in 1573, of *Tremellius* and *Junius*, whereof there are a great many Editions in *England*, *Germany* and *Geneva*, because it was look't upon by most of the Protestants at the beginning of their reformation, as if it had been review'd by the Authours themselves, the last Editions are better than the first. We may in the same place find the Criticism upon the Translation

Translation of *Leon de Juda*, printed at *Zurick* in 1543. and re-printed at *Paris* in 1545. by *Robert Stephens* with the Vulgar upon two Columns. Although the Divines of *Paris* had condemn'd this Work, they of *Salamanca* made a new Edition thereof in very fair Characters, and thus the Latin Translation of *Leon de Juda* a *Zuinglian* was authoriz'd by the Divines of *Spain*.

Bible of Leon de Juda.

### Bibles in vulgar Tongues.

ALL the Bibles in vulgar Languages before *Luther's* time were made from the Vulgar in the Latin Church, because Greek and Hebrew was not well understood in those times. Wherefore the Translations into the vulgar Tongues made by the *Albigenses*, *Waldenses* and those of the Sect of *Wickliff* are onely Translations from the ancient Latin Interpreter, the Translations made by the Catholicks at that time to oppose the Hereticks with are simple Translations from the Vulgar. But as it is impossible to translate well the ancient Latin Interpreter without understanding both Greek and Hebrew, these Translations could not be exact.

We have at present a French Translation of the Bible made from the Vulgar in 1294. by *Guars des Moubins*, Priest and Chanon of *Air* in the Bishoprick of *Terouane*. They of *Geneva* have a Copy hereof in their publick Library, and this was certainly the French Translation which was read in those days before *Calvin's* reformation, and is mention'd in the Preface of *Robert Olivetan* to his French Translation. *Mr. Jusfel*, Secretary of State, has also a Copy hereof in his own Library. This Translation was never printed.

Some Authours mention also the Bible translated into French by *Oreme* under King *Charles V.* The most famous French Translation from the vulgar is that which was made by the Divines of *Lowuain*, whereof there are a great many Editions; and it has several times been review'd by several persons. There was however before that time a French Translation from the Vulgar printed at *Antwerp* in 1530. See what we have hereupon observ'd in the second Book of this Criticism.

We

We have no French Translations from the Hebrew but those made by the Doctours of Geneva. Robert Olivetan a Kinsman, of John Calvin's, was the first who translated the Bible into French from the Originals: His Translation was printed at Neuchastel in 1535, and there was onely this Edition, because Calvin sometime afterwards review'd it, finding it not to be good French. Cornelius Bertram, finding also Calvin's Edition not to be exact, nor to agree well enough with the Originals, review'd it, with several other Doctours of Geneva, and since that time there has been no considerable alteration in the Bibles of Geneva. See what we have more largely observed in the second Book of this Criticism concerning these different Editions. They have been printed all manner of ways and some with two Columns, that is to say, with a new Latin Translation from the Hebrew, and another French one from the same Hebrew Text.

There is also a French Translation of *Diopati*, Minister of Geneva, whereof there have been several Editions. Lastly, Mr. *René Benoist*, Doctour of Divinity at Paris, and Parson of *S. Eustache*, has also publish'd a new Translation of the Bible from the Originals, although he understood neither Greek nor Hebrew. He did nothing but print the Bible of Geneva by changing some words into others which were synonymous.

Before Luther's Heresie in Germany there were some Translations of the Bible into High Dutch from the Vulgar; but *Martin Luther* was the first who made a Translation of the whole Scripture into High Dutch from the Originals; and not being satisfy'd with his first Translation he review'd it and made a second Edition: there were afterwards a great many Editions hereof. It was translated into Swedish, Finlandish and some other Tongues. As most of the Northern people followed Luther's Novelties they translated his new Bible into their own Languages. The Germans very much esteem an Edition of *Weimar*, whereof there are two Impressions, wherein some things have been corrected, but Luther's Text however has been preserv'd.

*Leon de Juda* has also made a Translation into High Dutch, having herein made use of some Jews. *Piscator*, a famous Calvinist, strove to get some reputation amongst those of his Sect by a new Translation of the Bible into High Dutch. It is not long since they of *Zurick* made also a new Translation of the Bible into the same Tongue.

The

The German Catholicks thought they were obliged to set up some Translations against that of the Protestants, and this occasion'd several German Translations from the Vulgar, and amongst the rest that of *Dietenbergerus*. *John Eckias* has also translated the Old Testament into High Dutch from the Vulgar, and *Jerom Emser* the new one from the same Vulgar.

The English have also a great many Translations of the Bible into their Tongue, and amongst others that of *Tyndal's*, who translated onely the *Pentateuch* and the New Testament: a certain Bishop call'd *Coverdal* assisted Tyndal in his new Translation. There is another of *Thomas Matthews's*, which differs very little from the former. *Tunstal* and *Heash*, two English Bishops, made also a new Translation of the Bible, which was for some time read in England; *Parker*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and some English Bishops made another under Queen *Elizabeth*, which was call'd the Bishops Translation; and lastly, King *James*, not being satisfy'd with all these Translations, commanded, at a Conference at *Hampton Court*, a new one to be made: which was done according as he had commanded, and this is the Translation which is us'd at present in the Church of England. The English have also translated the French Bible of Geneva into their Tongue, and Luther's New Testament in High Dutch. There is besides a Bible printed at *London* in Welch. The Irish have also a Translation of the Bible into their Tongue, which agrees pretty well with that of Luther's; there is also a Translation of the Old Testament into Irish, which they ascribe to one *Bedel*, and another of the New into the same Tongue to *Usher*, but I believe these two last Translations are not extant. The English Catholicks, who retir'd to *Rhemes*, made a Translation of the whole Bible into English from the Vulgar to oppose the English Protestants with.

The Polanders have a Translation of the Bible from the Original, made by the order of *Nicholas Radzevil*, Palatine of *Vilna*. There is also another of *James Wiecus*, a Jesuit, into the same Tongue from the Vulgar, which was made by order of Pope *Gregory XIII.* and approv'd by *Clement VIII.*

There are also some Bibles in the Hungarian Tongue, *Serarius* says he has seen a Copy thereof. *Gasper Charles* has made a Translation into that Tongue from the Original, which was afterwards review'd by *Albert Molnar*.

+ 9

The

Flemish  
Bibles.

The first Translation of the Bible by the Protestants into Flemish was made from that of *Luther's*; but as that was found incorrect it was agreed upon at the Synod of *Dort* that a new one should be made, which was accordingly done. See what we have hereupon observed in the second Book of this Criticism.

Spanish  
Bibles.

The Bible has also been translated by Spaniards, and amongst other Translations there is one which was made into this Tongue in the time of *S. Vincent Ferrer*. The Jews have also a Translation of the Old Testament printed at *Ferrara* in 1553. the title which runs thus, *Biblia en lengua Espagnola traduzida palabra de la verdad Hebraysa*, sufficiently demonstrates that this Translation is word for word from the original Hebrew. The Spanish Jews in the *Levant* have another Spanish Translation of one part of the Bible. *Cyprian de Valere*, a Protestant, printed a Translation of the whole Bible into Spanish from the Originals, but this Translation is hardly any thing else but a new Edition of another Spanish Translation, which had before been made by *Cassidoro de Reyna*, and printed at *Basil* 1569. There is also an Edition of the New Testament in Spanish, by *Francis de Enzinas*, in 1542. and another also of the same New Testament, by *John Perez* 1556.

Italian  
Bibles.

The most ancient Translation of the Bible into Italian is, as I think, that of *Jacobus de Voragin*, Archbishop of *Genes*. *Posserin* speaks as if it was an uncorrect Translation, others on the contrary very much esteem it. *Nicholas Malermi*, a Venetian Monk, printed at *Venice* in 1541. a Translation of the whole Bible in Italian from the Vulgar. *Antonio Brucciolo* in 1530. made a Translation of the whole Bible into Italian from the Originals, of which there were afterwards several Editions, and amongst others one in 1540. before which there is an Epistle to *Renée of France*, then Dutches of *Ferrara*, where the Interpreter largely speaks of the Editions of the Bible into vulgar Tongues, and he at the same time gives several reasons to shew that we ought not to forbid the reading them. The Italian Translation of *Diodati*, a *Geneva* Minister, has been much esteemed by the Protestants, and he is at present the great *Geneva* Authour.

I pass over several other Editions of the Bible into different Languages, because, as I have already observ'd, my design was onely to give the principal ones, by joining thereto some reflections for the benefit of the Readers.

A Cata-

*A Catalogue of Jewish and other Authours, which are not commonly known, which have been quoted in this Critical History of the Old Testament.*

AS we have quoted in this Critical History of the Old Testament the authority of several Authours that are scarce known, I thought it was convenient for me to give a Catalogue of them, and at the same time to make some observations on their Books, whether Manuscripts or Printed ones, for the illustrating several quotations in this Work.

*Aaron the Carait*. In speaking of the Sect of the *Carait* Jews we have often in this Work quoted this Authours Commentary on the *Pentateuch*, he lived about the year 1299. and his Commentary is in Manuscript in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory at *Paris*.

*Aaron Harisson*. There was printed at *Constantinople* in *Duodecimo* in 1581. a little abridgment of Grammar intituled *Celil Jophi*, that is to say *Excellent in Beauty*, the Authour of it is called *Aaron Harisson*; this little Treatise explains many things in short.

*Aben Ezra*, or rather *Abraham Aben Ezra*, is one of the most learned Jewish Rabbins, he has writ literal Commentaries on most part of the Bible, which are printed in the great Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil*. His style is very concise, which causeth it sometimes to be obscure, besides that the printed Copies are not altogether correct. There is a manuscript Copy of his Commentary on the *Pentateuch* in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory at *Paris*. Besides his Commentaries on the Scripture he has writ several Books of Grammar, and amongst others *Sepher Mosni Lescon hakkodesch*, that is to say, *The Book of Ballances of the Holy Tongue*, printed at *Venice* in *Duodecimo* in 1546. and *Sepher Isahut Bedikduk*, that is to say *The Book of Elegancy of Grammar*, printed at *Venice* in the same year. This Rabbin has composed

posed another Book intituled *Jesud Mora*, [The Foundation of Fear,] which is not a Book of Grammar, as *Buxtorf* has thought, but rather of Divinity, where he incites us to the study of the *Talmud* or the Law of the *Jews*. I made use of a manuscript Copy which is in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory, this Book has however been printed at *Venice*, and is a very little one, but it is hard to be found. *Aben Ezra* lived in the 12th Century, he was at *Rome* in 1146. at *Rhodes* in 1156. and died in 1165. he has writ several other Books, but I have onely quoted those I have just now spoke of.

*Aben Melech* is the Authour of a Grammatical Commentary on the whole Scripture, intituled *Miclol Jophi* [Perfection of Beauty] it contains the grammatical explanations of the Rabbins *Juda Kimchi* and some others in Abridgment, I made use of the Edition of *Constantinople* in *Folio*, there is another Edition of *Venice*.

*Abraham*. Most of the *Jews* make *Abraham* the Patriarch to be the Authour of a Book which has been several times printed, intituled *Sepher Fetsira* [Book of the Creation] I made use of the Edition of *Mantoua* in *Quarto*, whereto are join'd the Commentaries of *R. Abraham ben Dior*, *R. Moses Batrel*, *R. Moses Bar Nahman*, *R. Saadias Gaon*, and of *R. Eliezer*, although this Book has but very few sheets, there are however few Books whose manuscript Copies differ more than this does.

*Abraham ben Dior*. We have quoted his Commentary on the Book of the Creation, which is falsely ascribed to *Abraham*, I made use of the Edition of *Mantoua*, which we just now spoke of.

*Abraham de Balmes* is the Authour of an Hebrew Grammar intituled *Mikne Abraham* [The Possession of *Abraham*] it was printed at *Venice* in *Quarto*, with the Latin Translation of it word for word and very barbarous, we may also find it without the Latin Translation, this Rabbin taught the Christians in the School of *Padoua*.

*Abraham Seba* is the Authour of a Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*, printed at *Venice* in *Folio*, by *Bombergue* in 1523. the Book is intituled *Tseror Hammor*; he lived at the beginning of the last Century at the same time with *R. Abraham de Balmes*.

*Abrauvanel*. His name is *Don Isaac Abrauvanel*, who was driven out of *Spain* with other *Jews* in 1492. He made very large Commentaries on most of the Bible, his Commentaries on the *Pentateuch* have been printed at *Venice* in *Folio* in a very little Character, those

those upon the Historical Books, which the *Jews* call Prophetical, and upon the others, which they call the minor Prophets, have been printed in *Folio* in a fairer Character, there is however a second Edition in *Folio* in a fairer Character than these last whose Character is very little, I made use of the first Edition. His Book intituled *Ros Amana* [The chief of the Creation] where he very subtilly treats of the principal Articles of the Jewish Religion, was printed at *Venice* in *Quarto* 1545. *William Vorstius* has made a Latin Translation thereof, whereto he has join'd some Notes: the Book which this same *Abrauvanel* has composed intituled *Nahalat Aroth* [Possession of the Fathers] is a Commentary on the Treatise *Pirke Avoth*, both the one and the other were printed at *Venice* in *Quarto* in 1545. There is a learned Preface of this Authour's before his Book *Nahalat Avoth*, where he explains the succession of Tradition amongst the *Jews*, which is a very intricate piece of Work. I have besides quoted another Work of this same Rabbins intituled *Miphaloth Elohim* [Works of God] where he has learnedly treated of the Creation of the World, and at the same time examined whence *Moses* had what is writ in the Book of *Genesis*; this last Book has also been printed at *Venice* in *Quarto*.

*Abraham Usque*, is a Portuguese *Jew*, whose name is at the end of the Spanish Bible printed at *Ferrara*, as if he was the Authour of this Edition, in the Edition of 1553. we read thus in Gothick Letters, *A gloria y loor de nuestro Señor se acaba la presente, Biblia en lengua Española traducida de la verdadera origen Hebrayca por muy excellentes letrados con industria y diligencia de Abraham Usque Portugues.*

*Abulpharagius*. There was printed at *Oxford* in 1672. in *Quarto* the Oriental History of *Gregory Abulpharagius* in Arabick, with *Edward Pocock's* Latin Translation of it.

*Adam*. The Cabbalistic *Jews*, the *Sabaites*, the Arabian *Mahometan* Doctours mention the Books of *Adam* and of several others of these first Patriarchs, but all these Books have been invented by Impostors, who thereby would authorise the Tradition of their Religion by supposing that it came from God by the means of *Adam* and the other ancient Fathers or Patriarchs.

*Aliander*. I have quoted a manuscript Letter of *Ferom Aliander* to Father *Morin*, where he speaks of the ancient Samaritan *Tan*, it was writ from *Rome* 1628.

Andrew



*Andrew de Leon.* I have quoted a manuscript Letter of this *Religious*, which is full of invectives against the Bible of *Antwerp*, and especially against *Arias Montanus* who was the chief Authour of this great Work, it is writ in Spanish.

*Azarias.* R. *Azarias*, a learned Italian Jew, has writ a Book intituled *Meor Enaim* [The Light of the Eyes] divided into three Parts, the third is intituled *Imre Bina* [Words of Intelligence] where the Authour explains several difficulties of the Scripture, especially those relating to the ancient Translations of the Bible and Chronology, he quotes our Latin Authours, and especially the Books of the Fathers, he sometimes maintains Paradoxes, but is much more learned than most of the Jews, because understanding Latin he hath consulted the Christian Authours, we find in this same Book the History of *Aristeus* concerning the Septuagint Translation, translated into Hebrew, it was printed at *Mantoua* in *Quarto* in 1574. *con licenza de superioris*.

*Bahir.* The Jews mention a Book thus called, that is to say [Illustrious] which they look upon to be one of their most ancient Books. There was a little Book printed in *Holland* under this name, but it is not probable that this is the ancient *Bahir* of the Jews which is much larger and was never printed, it has nothing in it but mistick and Cabbalistic inventions, and several other superstitions of this nature.

*Ben Ascer, Ben Nephthali.* These are two famous Jewish Doctours who corrected the Hebrew Copies of the Bible, and afterwards divided the Jews about the various readings, we know not exactly the time they lived in, although R. *Ghedalia* is of opinion they lived about the beginning of the eleventh Century; we usually say *Ben Ascer* but the name of this Doctour is R. *Aaron* Son of R. *Moses* of the Tribe of *Ascer*, so the intire name of *Ben Nephthali* is R. *Moses* Son of *David* of the Tribe of *Nephthali*.

*Bibles.* The best manuscript Copies of the Hebrew Bible mention'd in this Work are in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory in *Paris*, there are also very good ones in the Kings Library, and especially one in very fair Characters; I have also consulted those in the Library of *Sorbon*, where there are a very great many but few good ones.

*Behai,*

*Behai*, or as others write *Bahie*, is the name of a Rabbin who has made large Commentaries on the *Pentateuch*; I made use of the third Edition, which is that of *Constantinople* in 1517. in *Folio*.

*Cozri*, or as others write *Cusari*, is the Title of a learned Book concerning the true Religion, composed by R. *Juda Levite*, who lived at the same time as *Aben Ezra*, there have been two Editions of it at *Venice*, the first contains onely the Text of the Authour, and the other was printed at the same place in *Quarto* by *John de Gara*, with a Commentary of R. *Juda Muscato*, this Book was composed by the Authour in Arabick, and afterwards translated into Rabbinical Hebrew, by *Juda ben Tibbon*, and it is this Translation that was printed. *Buxtorf* the Son has also made a Latin Translation of it; which he has printed with the Authours Hebrew Text, there is hardly any Jewish Book that is more worth our reading than this.

*David Gans.* We have a Jewish Chronolgy under this Authour's name intituled, *Tsemah David*. *William Vorstius* has translated most of it into Latin but we ought to take notice his Translation is very faulty, and therefore we ought to have recourse to the Copy.

*David.* We have quoted an ancient Armenian Doctour called *David*, to whom the Armenians ascribe part of their Translation of the Bible out of Greek into Armenian.

*Ebed Jesu.* It is a Catalogue of Chaldæan or Syrian Authours, which was composed by *Ebed Jesu*, Metropolitan of *Soba*. *Abraham Ecchellensis*, a Maronite, printed it in Syriack, with a Latin Translation, at *Rome* 1653. whereto he has added some Notes; there is another Latin Edition without the Syriack Text.

*Elias Levita.* We have quoted this Rabbin several times, and especially his Book intituled *Massoret Hammassoret*, which is an excellent Treatise on the *Massoret* printed at *Venice* by *Bombergue*, in *Quarto*, he has besides writ a Chaldee Dictionary, and another Dictionary called *Tisbi*, which is a glossary upon the barbarous Hebrew words, and which has been translated into Latin by *Faggins*: he is the first and almost onely Jew who has apply'd himself to the *Massoret* or Criticism upon the Hebrew Text, and although he was a Jew he taught the *Christians* at *Rome* and *Venice*, he has also

also given us several Books of Grammar, which have been most of them translated into Latin, he has besides made very good observations on the Books of R. *David Kimchi*, and *Moses Kimchi*; in a word, he is the least superstitious Rabbin of them all, and deserves most to be read.

*Elias Mizorahi*, or Oriental, is the Authour of a Commentary upon the Commentaries of *Rashi* upon the five Books of *Moses* printed at *Venice* in Folio.

*Ephrem*. We have spoke of the Works of *S. Ephrem* in Greek, there are part of them in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory at *Paris*.

*Ephod* or *Aphodi* or *Maafee Ephod* is the Title of an Hebrew Grammar of R. *Parfais Duran*, as I have found it in a manuscript Copy I have made use of, there is a large Preface at the beginning of this Work.

*Ghedalia* is the Authour of a chronological History intituled *Scilscotech hakkabala* [Chain of Tradition] I made use of a Copy printed at *Venice* by *John de Gara*, *con licenza de superiori*.

*Halicor Olam* is a Book which explains the ways of speaking in the *Talmud*, printed at *Venice* in *Quarto* in 1545. the Authour is called R. *Josua Levita*. *Constantine* l'Empereur caus'd it to be printed at *Leyden* with the Latin Translation, this Work may be usefull to those who would study the Latin.

*Hillel*. There are several famous *Hillels* amongst the *Jews*, he whom we have quoted in this Work was certainly some Head of an University, who laboured at the correction of the Hebrew Copies of the Bible, we find in the Margin of several manuscript Bibles the name of this Rabbin, and that which has most recommended him is that he is thought ancients than indeed he is.

*Jacob Baal Haturim* is the Authour of an allegorical and cabbalistick Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*, printed at *Venice* in *Quarto* in 1540. This Commentary is also in the great Hebrew Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil*, this same Rabbin has also made an abridgment of the *Talmud* intituled *Tour Orak haiim*, printed at *Venice*, with the Commentaries of R. *Joseph Caro*, in Folio in 1564.

*Jacob Haiim* was the first who composed the body of the *Massoret* which is in the great Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil* with the Preface

face at the beginning, he has also noted several various readings which had not been observed by the *Massorets*.

*Jona R. Jona* is an ancient Jewish Grammarian whose Book was never printed. I made use of a manuscript Copy in the Library of Monsieur *Hably*, Counsellour of the Court of *Paris*.

*Joseph Aben Caspi* is the Authour of an Hebrew Dictionary which I never saw in print. I made use of a manuscript Copy in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory at *Paris*.

*Job*. I have mention'd a Translation of the Book of *Job* into vulgar Greek, printed in *Quarto* by the *Jews* of *Constantinople* with the Hebrew Text.

*Joseph Albo*, a learned Spanish *Jew*, has composed an excellent Book intituled *Sepher Ikkerim* [The Book of Foundations] which treats of the chief Articles of the Jewish Faith, there are several Editions, I made use of one of *Venice* in *Quarto* in square letters.

*Joseph ben Jehaia* is the Authour of a Commentary on the *Canticles*, and upon the other Books which the *Jews* call the five Volumes, he has also made a Commentary on the *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Job*, *Daniel*, *Ezra* and the *Chronicles* all these Commentaries were printed in one Volume in Folio at *Bologna* in 1538.

*Josippus ben Gorion*. The *Jews* at the beginning of the last Century printed at *Constantinople* a History under the name of this Authour as if he was the real *Joseph*, but by the bare reading of it we may easily judge that this Book was fictitious, the ancient *Jews* were ignorant of the History of the true *Joseph*: and therefore he who composed this in Hebrew has onely taken what he thought was fit to be inserted into his History, adding to it some Fables or false Histories, there are two Editions hereof, one at *Constantinople* in 1510. and the other at *Basil* with *Munster's* Latin Translation 1541. this last Edition is not intire, there are some Chapters wanting at the beginning and several at the end, besides it is imperfect in many places, and therefore we ought to have recourse to the Edition of *Constantinople* which is compleat. The *Jews* have besides an abridgment of this History of *Ben Gorion's*, which was printed at *Wormes* 1529. with *Munster's* Latin Translation.

*Isaac ben Arama* is the Authour of a very large Commentary on the five Books of *Moses* intituled *Akedat Isaac*, there have been two Editions hereof, one at *Venice* in Folio, and another at *Salonica* in Folio.

*Joel ben Soeb* is the Authour of a Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*, intituled *Sepher Olath Sabbat*, and printed at *Venice* in *Folio*.

*Juda Hing* is usually call'd by the Rabbins *The first and most ancient Grammarian*, although there were some before him: his Books of Grammar have not been printed. I made use of a manuscript Copy in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory, wherewith is joined a manuscript Catalogue of the Jewish Grammarians.

*Jubasin*, or *Sepher Jubasin*, that is to say [The Book of Families] is onely a collection of several chronological and historical Books join'd together by R. *Abraham Zacuth*; I made use of the Edition of *Constantinople*, there is another of *Cracovia* which is esteemed the better, there are however many faults both in the one and in the other, especially in the proper names, which the Jews are usually ignorant of.

*Kimhi*. We find in the Jewish Books three Rabbins of this name, which are *Joseph Kimhi*, *David Kimhi* and *Moses Kimhi*; there are none of the first's Works printed, who was Father to the two others. *David Kimhi* has been the most followed of all the Jewish Grammarians by the Christians, who have composed their Dictionaries and Translations of the Bible by the Books of this Rabbin, or his Commentaries on the Scripture, most of which have been printed in the great Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil*: we have his Grammar called *Sepher Miclol*, and his Dictionary intituled *Sepher Scorascim*; there are several Editions both of the one and other; I made use of that of *Venice* in *Folio* by *Bombergue* in 1545 and 1546. There are in this Edition the Notes of R. *Elias Levita*. *Moses Kimhi* has made a little Grammar which has been printed at *Venice* in *Duodecimo*, intituled *Mahalac Scevile Had-daath*, with the Rabbins Notes. *Elias Levita* has made another Edition in *Holland*, with Latin observations thereon.

*Leo Madena* is the Authour of a little Book intituled *Historia de Riti Hebraici*, whereof there are two Editions, the first at *Paris* in 1637 and the second, which is the best, at *Venice* in 1638. the Authour had made this History more large than it is in print, *Selden* has quoted this Manuscript, which no doubt is to be found in some Library in *England*.

Lombro-

*Lombroso*. *Jacob Lombroso* is the Authour of a new Edition of the Bible in Hebrew, with little literal Notes printed at *Venice* in *Quarto* in 1639.

*Levi ben Gerson* has made several Commentaries on the Scripture, some of which are printed in the great Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil*, his Commentary on the *Pentateuch* has been printed by it self at *Venice* by *Bombergue*, most of his other Commentaries on the Scripture have been printed at the same place, there are some manuscript Copies thereof in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory of *Paris*: we have quoted a Book of the same Authour's intituled *Sepher Milhamot Hassem* [The Book of the Wars of the Lord] printed at *Riva* or *Reif* in *Folio* in 1560.

*Mardochai ben Contino* a *Constantinopolitan Jew* is the Authour of a Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*; I made use of a manuscript Copy in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory of *Paris*.

*Mechilta* is an ancient allegorical Commentary on part of the Book of *Exodus*; I made use of the Edition of *Constantinople* in *Folio*.

*Menahem de Recanati* is the Authour of a Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*, which is onely a collection of the ancient Jewish allegories, most of the Copies were heretofore burnt by order of the Inquisition. I made use of a manuscript Copy in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory at *Paris*.

*Menahem Lonzano* has composed a Book intituled *Sette Yadot* [Two Hands] where he carefully examines by ancient manuscript Copies the various readings of the Hebrew Text, and he affirms that it ought to be corrected by the *Mafforet*; this Book was printed at *Venice* in *Quarto* in 1618. I could not find it, I have had onely some extracts of it communicated to me, whence I easily judged of the rest, as there are few Jews who apply themselves to the criticism of the Hebrew Text, this Book is worth our reading.

*Mesrop*. We have quoted an ancient Armenian Hermit called *Mesrop*, who was the Authour of the Armenian Characters.

*Medrascim*. Under the name of *Medrascim* are comprehended the ancient Jewish allegorical Commentaries, whereof there are a great many both upon the *Pentateuch* and some other Books of the Bible, which the Jews call the five Volumes, most of them have been printed at *Salonica* and *Venice*. I made use of the Copy of

*Salonica in Folio*. In these Works are collected the allegorical explanations of the ancient Jewish Doctours.

*Moses Alseck*. This Authour has writ several Commentaries on the Scripture, some of which have been printed at *Constantinople*, but most of them at *Venice in Folio* under different titles, he writ about these latter times, and after *Abravanel*.

*Moses Micotfi*, or *R. Moses de Corsi*, is a learned Spanish Jew, who writ a Book intituled *Sepher Misewoth Gadol* [The great Book of Precepts] wherein he explains the Commandments of the Jewish Law, this Authour deserves to be read upon this Subject, because he has treated upon it very learnedly and judiciously. I made use of the Copy printed by *Bombergue* at *Venice in Folio* in 1547.

*Moses*. I have quoted a certain Armenian Doctour called *Moses*, to whom the Armenians partly ascribe their Translation of the Bible out of Greek into Armenian about *S. Chrysostom's* time.

*Moses Negara* is the Authour of a Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*, intituled the *Kah Ton* [Good Doctrin] and printed at *Constantinople* in 1571.

*Moses ben Maimon*, who is usually called by abridgment *Rambam* or *Maimonides*, has acquir'd the most reputation of any Jew, as well among those of his own Religion as amongst *Christians*, he made an abridgment of the *Talmud* in Rabbinical Hebrew when he was but very young, which has since been printed under the title of *Jad Haz Zaka* [Strong hand] They who would understand the Jewish Laws or Ceremonies ought to read this Book, which has been printed at *Venice in Folio* with Glosses or Commentaries, this Book hath also been printed at *Constantinople* with the same Commentaries in 1509. I made use of this last Edition excepting onely in the first part of it, which was wanting in my Copy, which I supply'd by an Edition of *Venice in Quarto* of this first part by it self and without Commentaries, there are onely some little Notes added in the Margins, which addition is very convenient. He afterwards compos'd his Commentary upon the *Misna*, which the Jews have call'd his great Work, and which he writ not in Hebrew as he had his abridgment of the *Talmud*, but in Arabick, and therefore the Translation hereof in Rabbinical Hebrew is not his, besides he was older when he made the Book intituled *More Mevokim*, whereof we have at present two Latin Translations: the first is *Augustine Justinian's* printed at *Paris* in 1520. the other is *Buxtorf's* the Son's and is much more correct than

than the former. *R. Moses* has compos'd also this Work in Arabick, which was afterwards translated by *Samuel ben Tibbon* his Scholar, so that he himself received the Translation of his own Work and approv'd of it. We are to observe that this last Book of *R. Moses*, being full of Philosophy and many Novelties, very much scandalized the Jews, especially those of *France*, who oppos'd the publishing of it, as also to the first Book of his abridgment of the *Talmud* where the same Principles are, they went so far as to condemn this Book to be burnt, we may see all these disputes in this Rabbin's Letters printed at *Venice in Duodecimo*: to conclude, this Book intituled *More Nevocim* has been printed at *Venice* and many other places in *Folio*, with Glosses or Commentaries; I made use of an Edition of *Sabioneta* or *Sablonete in Folio* in 1553. This Rabbin is usually call'd an *Ægyptian* although he was of *Cordova*, because being forced to quit *Spain* he fled into *Ægypt*, where he was Physician to the *Soldan*, he lived about the middle of the twelfth Century, I speak not here of his other Works because I made no mention of them in my Critical History.

*Moses Bar Nahman*, who is call'd for shortness *Ramban*, lived at the same time, he made a Commentary on the Books of the Law, which has been printed in *Folio* under the title of *Hidusce Hattorah*. [New Meditations on the Law.]

*Muscato*, otherwise call'd *R. Juda Muscato* is the Authour of the Commentary on the Book *Cozri*, which we before spok'd of, and which was printed at *Venice in Quarto* with this Commentary in 1591. *Con licenza de superiori*.

*Nathan*, otherwise call'd *R. Isaac Nathan* is the first Jew who made a Hebrew Concordance on the Bible, which Concordance was printed at *Venice in Folio* by *Bombergue* in 1524. he compos'd this Concordance by the Latin one, so that the Jews are beholden to the *Christians* for the Concordances they have at present, which are absolutely necessary for the understanding of the *Massoret* or Criticism on the Hebrew Text.

*Rabbot*: See what has been before observed upon the word *Medraschim*, for these are the same ancient Jewish Doctours allegorical Commentaries which have been collected, they are thus call'd in the Edition of *Salonica*, *Midrase Rabba*, as who should say Great Commentary, and this *Midrase Rabba*, which is set down

down in the tittle of this Edition, contains the illustration of the *Medrasims* or Explanations of the ancient *Jews*, when we would expreis these sorts of Commentaries upon *Genesis*, we say *Berefcit Rabba*, upon *Exodus Scemot Rabba*, and so of the rest, by taking the first word of each Book and joining thereto *Rabba*, and when we speak of more we say *Rabboth* in the plural.

*Saadias Gaon*, that is to say *Saadias* the Excellent, which was the title given to the Jewish Doctours in that time; he was Head of an University at the beginning of the tenth Century, he made an Arabick Translation of the Scripture, whereof we have at present all the *Pentateuch*, he also writ Commentaries upon some Books of the Bible, and a Book intituled *Sepher Haemunot*, where he treats of the chief Articles of the Jewish Faith, we have onely one Translation of this Work in Rabbinical Hebrew, which was writ in Arabick by the Authour, he has also composed some Books of Grammar, mentioned by the other *Jews*, but they were not very methodical, and because several Rabbins since him have writ more exactly upon this Subject they have not been printed.

*Samuel Laniado*. We have a Commentary of this Authours upon the five Books of *Moses*, and he has called this Commentary *Celi Hemda* [Vessel of desire] which was printed at *Venice* in *Folio* by *John de Gara* in 1596.

*Sabaïtes*. We have in this Work spoke of the ancient *Sabaïtes*, but as the Authours who have treated upon them disagree amongst themselves, I have preferred *Ramban's* opinion before most others, because he had not onely read the Arabian Doctours Books, who have spoke of the *Sabaïtes*, but he likewise understood the Religion of the Hebrews, and knew how to judge of the ancient Sect of the *Sabaïtes*, wherefore most of what I have said upon this Subject is taken from him, but to speak truth, we have very little knowledge of this ancient Sect.

*Salomon Farhi*. We are often mistaken in quoting this Rabbini, who is called *Isaaki* and not *Farhi*, however by reason of this pretended name of *Farhi* some have thought that he was of *Lunel* in *Languedoc*, but he was of *Troyes* in *Champaigne* as *R. Gedalia* and most of the other Jewish Chronologists affirm; he lived in the twelfth Century, his Books are much esteemed of by the *Jews*, and we may say he is their great Authour. We have his Commentaries on the Scripture in the Bibles of *Venice* and *Basil*, there

there are also printed with the body of the *Talmud* his Glosses or Commentaries on this great Book.

*Samuel ben T'sartfa* has writ a Book of *Biorim* or [Illustration] upon the Commentaries of *Aben Ezra* upon the *Pentateuch*; this Book was printed under the title of *Mekgr Haiim* [Source of Life] at *Mantoua* in *Folio* in 1559. He does not so much endeavour to illustrate the difficulties in the Commentaries of *Aben Ezra*, but that he also gives others opinions.

*Scem Tobh*. This Rabbini has writ a Cabbalistical Book concerning the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet where he treats of the *Taghain* or little horns or points which the *Jews* put over certain letters in the manuscript Copies which are dedicated to the use of their Synagogues, this Authour explains all these niceties very subtly; I made use of a manuscript Copy in the Library of the Fathers of the Oratory of *Paris*.

*Seder Olam*, that is to say [The order of the World] this Book contains a chronological History, there are two sorts hereof, viz. *Seder Olam Rabba* and *Seder Olam Zutha*, the first is the intire History, which is called the great *Rabba* to distinguish it from *Seder Olam Zutha*, which is onely an abridgment of the other. The *Jews* have no chronological Book ancienter than this, although it is not so old as some would have it to be. I made use of a Copy in *Octavo* printed at *Mantoua*. *Genebrard* has translated these two Books into Latin.

*Simeon Bar T'sema* has writ a Commentary on the Book of *Job* intituled *Sepher Beth Mispat* [Book of the House of Judgment] There is a large Preface before this Book, which treats of the Book of *Job*, most of the Jewish opinions concerning the Authour of this Book are therein set down; I made use of a Copy in *Quarto* printed at *Venice* by *John de Gara*.

*Simeon Haddarfan*, that is to say [Simeon the Preacher] has writ a Commentary on the whole Scripture, which is onely a collection of the ancient Jewish Doctours allegorical Explanations, wherefore he is called at the beginning of his Book intituled *Falith Hatorah*, *Rosch Haddarfanim*, Chief of the Preachers; this Work was printed in *Folio* at *Craoovia* in 1595.

*Talmud*. By this name are comprehended the Books wherein the *Jews* have comprehended every thing that serves for the Exposition of their Law. We may observe that the *Jews* divide there



their Law into the Written, which is comprehended in the Books of *Moses*, and the Oral Law, which is the ancient Doctors explanation of this first Law. The Book wherein these Doctors explanations are contain'd is call'd *Talmud*, that is to say *Doctrine*, the *Jews* usually also call it *Ghemara*, although the *Ghemara* is onely one of the chief parts of the *Talmud*, which consists of the *Misna* and the *Ghemara*. The *Misna* serves as the Text to the *Talmud*, wherefore when I have quoted the *Misna* I have understood this Text, which is writ in indifferent good Rabbinical Hebrew but so concise that it is hard to be understood unless we understand the matter there treated of. The *Ghemara* serves in a manner instead of a Gloss to this Text, but we may truly say of this Gloss that it is worse than the Text, not onely because it contains a great many dreams which are not in the *Misna*, but because it is writ in Chaldee in a very obscure and intricate style, in quoting of the *Ghemara* the *Misna* or the Text of the *Talmud*, I understood this Gloss. It is often printed by it self, the best and most convenient Edition is that of *Holland*, because there has been points or vowels added to the Hebrew Text for the facilitating the reading. The *Talmud* has been oftentimes printed intire in many places, and one of the best Editions of it is an ancient one of *Venice* in several great Volumes, we may observe that there are two sorts of *Talmuds*, one of *Jerusalem* and the other of *Babylon*, the first which is the lesser was printed at *Venice* by *Bombergue*, the other is that which is usually read and is more common with the *Jews*, so that when we speak simply of the *Talmud* we understand that of *Babylon*, and when we quote the other we usually add *Hierosolymitane*.

*Toldoth Aaron*. [Genealogy of *Aaron*] is a Catalogue of the Passages of the Scripture which are quoted in the *Talmud*, where at the same time the places in the *Talmud* where they are, are marked, there are several Editions.

*Zohar* is the name of an allegorical and cabbalistic Commentary on the five Books of *Moses*, which the *Jews* look upon as a very ancient one, there are two Editions, one of *Mantona* the other of *Cremona*, in *Folio*.